DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 400 671 EC 305 156

AUTHOR	Bortolussi, Vicki, Ed.
TITLE	Communicator. 1996.
INSTITUTION	California Association for the Gifted.
PUB DATE	96
NOTE	142p.
AVAILABLE FROM	CAG, 426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040; e-mail: cbs2000@aol.com; fax: 415-965-0654; telephone: 415-965-0653.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
JOURNAL CIT	Communicator; v27 n1-4 Win-Fall 1996
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Advocacy; Bilingual Education Programs; Citizen Participation; Computer Literacy; Computer Uses in Education; Educational Policy; *Educational Technology; Elementary Secondary Education; *Gifted; Illiteracy; Internet; Language Arts; Leadership Qualities; *Literacy; *Parent Participation; *Politics of Education; Reading Aloud to Others; Reading Instruction; Special Education; Television Viewing; Voting
IDENTIFIERS	California

ABSTRACT

This compilation of four journal issues on gifted education in California focuses on the following topics: (1) literacy for the 21st century; (2) technology; (3) reflections on gifted education; and (4) politics. Major articles include: "English Language Arts in California's Schools: A New Beginning" (Diane Levin and Catherine Barkett); "Parents Promoting Literacy" (Marilyn Morrison); "The Illiterate Gifted Student: Oxymoron or Reality" (Kathie Aihara); "Nurturing a Nation of Nonreaders: Teaching Reading for Pleasure in a Show-Me Society" (Angel Barrett); "Teaching Literacy to Gifted Students" (Bill Raabe); "Read Aloud to a Gifted Child?" (Lisa Heimlich); "Bilingual Literacy" (Robbie Wedeen); "An Internet Primer" (Judy Lieb and Tony Anderson); "Exploding Myths About Television and Children" (Milton Chen); "Don't Let Your Kids Have All the Fun: Become A Computer Literate Parent" (Marilyn Morrison); "Computers: The Home Schooling Connection" (Roberta Ponce); "The Software Explosion: A Guide to Selecting Instructional Materials For Gifted Students" (Hillary S. Hertzog); "Technology Copyright Laws: Your District Probably Has a Policy--Do You Know the Guidelines?" (Marge Hoctor); "And the Internet Shall Set You Free? Road Signs and Insights for the Internet Traveler" (Andy Rogers); "The Internet: Check Your Sources" (Sara Armstrong); "Student As Instructor Project: Using Instructional Television To Empower Students" (Victor Lamkay); "Gifted and Talented Education Moves Forward" (Catherine Barkett); "Parent Involvement: Past and Future" (Sharon A. Freitas); "How To Turn Your Summer Vacation into a Learning Experience" (Marilyn Morrison); "Gifted Education Politics: School Reform" (Lisa Jeffrey); "Raising Our Children To Be Educated Voters" (Marilyn Morrison); "How Can I Get Involved? Being an Advocate for Gifted Education at All Levels of Government" (Lisa M. Heimlich); "Seven Characteristics of Highly Effective Technology Leaders" (John A. Vaille); and "Pondering Politics in the Classroom" (Victoria Siegel and Sandra N. Kaplan). (CR)

ED 400 671

Communicator. Volume 27. Numbers 1-4.
Bortoiussi. Vicki. Ed.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
S. Mountford
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

EC 305150

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

COMMUNICATOR

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

VOLUME 27, NO 1, WINTER 1996

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

LITERACY FOR THE 21st CENTURY

English Language Arts in California's Schools: A New Beginning
Gifted and Talented State Coordinator and English Language Arts Consultant explain how the State is undertaking a comprehensive 10-step approach to improving literacy among all students.

On the Home Front
As a parent, find out what can be done in the home to improve literacy as well as questions and answers on the latest brain research and its implications for parents.

Bilingual Literacy
How can we develop this important skill?

Young People's Pullout
From snowflakes, poetry, opinion, and awesome authors, here's a section for the young at heart and in mind.

Read Aloud
All children, even those who are gifted, can benefit from good modeling.

Curriculum
Dive into the disciplines, use universal themes, and nurture literacy.

TechNet
From an Internet primer to libraries of tomorrow, find out more about technological literacy.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS IN CALIFORNIA'S SCHOOLS: A NEW BEGINNING

BY DIANE LEVIN AND CATHERINE BARKETT

Recent national and state reports of assessment results demonstrate that the reading achievement of California's students lags behind the achievement of every other state in the nation (NAEP report, 1993-94 data). An alarming number of our students cannot read at basic levels.

Last spring, in response to what has been seen as a crisis in reading, Superintendent of Public Instruction Delaine Eastin formed the California Reading Task Force. Comprised of 27 members, this group represented a cross section of teachers, principals, superintendents, school board members, professors, community members, business persons, and parents. Their assignment was to develop recommendations for both immediate and long-term implementation in order to improve student achievement so that *"every student might leave the third grade no longer learning to read, but reading to learn."*

Over a four-month period, members reviewed research and listened to presentations from experts in reading curriculum and instruction. As a result, the Task Force determined and stated in their report, *Every Child a Reader*, that a balanced and comprehensive approach must have:

1) a strong literature, language and comprehension program that includes a balance of oral and written language,
2) an organized, explicit skills program that includes phonemic awareness (sounds in words), phonics, and decoding skills to address the needs of the emergent reader,
3) ongoing diagnosis that informs teaching and assessment that ensures accountability, and
4) a powerful, early intervention program that provides individual tutoring for children at risk of reading failure.

Another major conclusion of the Reading Task Force is that teacher education and inservice training *"must be redesigned with a greater emphasis on beginning reading. The public schools and teacher training institutions need to increase their collaborative efforts to improve the preparation of teachers."*

The Reading Task Force developed 10 major recommendations (See summary in accompanying box.) that provide the focal

See NEW BEGINNING, 29

CONTENTS

PUBLISHED BY THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

Executive Director, Carol Brown Spencer
415.965.0653 Fax 415.965.0654

The CAG Communicator is published four times during the year: Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer. Opinions expressed by individual authors do not necessarily represent official positions of the Association. Subscriptions are available to non-members at an annual cost of $25.00

OFFICERS 1994–1996

Executive Committee

President: Martha Flournoy
Vice President: Margaret Gosfield
Secretary: Marge Hector
Treasurer: Judith Roseberry
State Parent Council Chair: Vera Eby
Past President: Sandra Kaplan

Regional Representatives

Bay Area:	Joyce Kubota Kennedy
	Patty Bart
Capitol:	Deanne Quinn
	Sharon Freitas
Joshua Tree:	Margaret Jones
	Emilie Naher
Mission:	Vicki Steinitz
	Amelia Rodriguez
Mt. Shasta:	Barbara Fox Roumousset
	Lyra Josefsson
Orange:	Iris Yamooka
	Karen Grindald
Pacific:	Linda Calvin
	Judy Smith
Palomar:	Dave Hermanson
	Pat Paluso
Redwood:	Carol Butzbach
	Myra Kaye
San Joaquin:	Donna Denham
	Lisa Waters
Santa Lucia:	Geri Williams
	Margaret Rodrigues

COMMUNICATOR EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: Vicki Bortolussi
Associate Editors
Curriculum: Angel Barrett
Children's Topics: Linda Brug
Parents: Marilyn Morrison
Special Projects: Lisa Heimlich
Technology: Judy Lieb
Production: Madsteve
Special Assistance: Heather Schwent

SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL

To submit articles for publication, send hardcopy and a 3.5-inch disk (Mac or PC) saved as a text (ASCII) file. All submissions will be given careful consideration. Photos and camera-ready artwork are particularly desirable. Send all material with your name, address, phone number, fax number and Internet address to Vicki Bortolussi, *Communicator* Editor, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Rd., Moorpark, CA. Tel. 805-378-1405, vckb@aol.com

REPRINTING OF MATERIALS

Articles appearing in the *Communicator* may be reprinted as desired unless marked by © or reprinted from another source. Please credit the *Communicator* and send a copy of your publication containing the reprint to the Editor.

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

1 **English Language Arts in California's Schools: A New Beginning**
Diane Levin and Catherine Barkett

7 **Parents Promoting Literacy**
Marilyn Morrison

11 **The Illiterate Gifted Student: Oxymoron or Reality?**
Kathie Aihara

12 **Nurturing a Nation of Nonreaders**
Angel Barrett

15 **Teaching Literacy to Gifted Students**
Bill Raabe

17 **Read Aloud to a Gifted Child?**
Lisa Heimlich

23 **Bilingual Literacy**
Robbie Wedeen

31 **Tomorrow's Public Libraries**
Al Milo

32 **Looking Forward: Schools and Research**
Diane Oestreich

3 **Calendar**

3 **Letters**

4 **From the President**

4 **News Notes**

5 **From the Editor**

6 **Meet the *Communicator* Editorial Board**

9 **On the Home Front** Grow Those Dendrites!, Marilyn Morrison & Barbara Clark

16 **Book Review** *Nongradedness—Helping It to Happen*, Ron Fontaine

19 **Young People's Pullout** Linda Brug

26 **TechNet** An Internet Primer, Judy Lieb & Tony Anderson

33 **Curriculum** Diving Into the Disciplines, Sandy Kaplan & Victoria Steinitz

37 **Curriculum** Universal Theme Provides Powerful Focus for Gifted Students, Angel Barrett

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LETTERS

The following letter comes from Daniel Koegel and is reprinted here in his own words. Daniel's letter is followed by a response from Marcy Cook, CAG's puzzlemeister in the September, 1995, issue of the Communicator.

Dear Young People's Pullout:

PUZZLE #3 IS IMPOSSIBLE because:

1. The circul is on 1 or 6 because the polygons are adjacent.
2. The trapuzoid has to be on G because 6 is the only number that has more than 3 facters. So the circul is on 1.
3. The square, rectangel, and trapazoid can't be adjacent to each other so they have to be in 2 and 4. The shapes with nintey degre angel can't be multiplites of two.

Therefor that puzzle #3 is impossibal.

Daniel Koegel
Grade 3
Joan Douglas, Teacher

Dear Daniel:

Thank you for your letter regarding puzzle 3 in the fall issue of the CAG Communicator. I was very pleased that you took the time to correspond with me and to question the possibility of the solution.

You are 100% correct with your analysis that the puzzle is impossible if we interpret clue B to mean that no two quadrilaterals can be next to each other. However, if we interpret clue B to mean that all 3 quadrilaterals are not adjacent to each other, then two could be next to each other and the third one separated. Thus the quadrilaterals are not adjacent to each other. Clue B reads, "The quadrilaterals are not adjacent to each other." It depends on the interpretation of that statement whether the puzzle is possible or impossible.

Problem solving is such an exciting adventure, for different meanings may produce different results. Thank you for looking at the puzzle in a different way and thus coming up with a second possible solution (that it is impossible).

I praise you and your teacher, Mrs. Joan Douglas, for challenging the solution and defending your thinking.

Marcy Cook

Let Us Hear From You

Whether through letters and/or articles, the *Communicator* is your journal. Send letters to the editor to Dr. Vicki Bortolussi, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Road, Moorpark, CA 93021. Letters must be signed and must include name, address, and telephone number. Letters will not be returned or acknowledged, and the *Communicator* Editorial Board reserves the right to print letters as space permits. Your opinions are important to all of us. We welcome your comments and look forward to your letters.

HOW TO REACH CAG

MAIL
Write to Carol Brown Spencer, Executive Director, CAG, 426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040

AMERICA ONLINE
Direct inquiries to the CAG Office via America Online. Our E-mail address is cbs2000@aol.com.

PHONE OR FAX
To reach the CAG Office by telephone, call 415.965.0653; to contact by FAX, dial 415.965.0654.

CALENDAR

JANUARY 27, 1996
Irvine, CA - 22nd Annual Conference of the Orange County Council/Gifted and Talented Education (OCC/GATE) in affiliation with CAG. University High School, 4771 Campus Dr., 8:00 A.M.–1:05 P.M. Pre-registration, $25; site registration, $30. Obtain registration form from (Mr.) Pat Phelan, 714-957-2846.

FEBRUARY 29, 1996
Los Angeles - CAG Board Meeting, LAX Hilton and Towers.

MARCH 1–3, 1996
Los Angeles - 34th Annual CAG Conference, "GATE Connections: Computers, Curriculum and Community," LAX Hilton and Towers. See the CAG conference brochure for details.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

March 1-3, 1996

34th Annual CAG Conference

Los Angeles

MARCH 3, 1996
Los Angeles - Parent Conference, LAX Hilton and Towers, 8:30 A.M.–2 P.M.

MARCH 3, 1996
Los Angeles - Student Seminar, LAX Hilton and Towers, 8 A.M.–1:45 P.M.

APRIL 12–14, 1996
CAG Board Meeting, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sacramento.

JUNE 14–16, 1996
Asilomar - CAG Board Retreat for new and returning officers and directors.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARTHA FLOURNOY

I would like to extend a hearty thank you to Jean Drum for her dedication and service to CAG and the *Communicator* as its editor. It is a job that requires time, commitment, and persistence, and she did it all.

Recognizing the amount of work as well as the potential to expand and explore new horizons for the *Communicator*, the CAG board endorsed the idea of creating an Editorial Board to oversee the *Communicator*. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the members of the Editorial Board to our family of volunteers. Each member of our family contributes in his/her own way and welcomes increased participation in CAG. Please contact our editorial staff with ideas and contributions you might have.

Literacy for our gifted children is the biggest challenge for parents and educators. I found food for thought in Marcia Brown's, *Lotus Seeds: Children, Pictures, and Books*.

> ...perhaps books are more important than we know. They act on a creature enacting as well as living his life, as he starts out on the long struggle to make of himself a human being.
>
> Mesmerized by the charm of the little child, we sometimes fill his room with mirrors instead of windows. We sometimes forget that he is a seed and bud and that the full flowering of his maturity is our main concern. The fruit must be allowed to ripen, slowly, naturally.

As parents and teachers, are we filling our children's rooms with mirrors or with windows? Much of our time is consumed by activities that are more "mirror-like" than "window-like." We juggle schedules that involve soccer, ballet, piano, art, language and more, all of which can be positive and enriching. Do we schedule time to read, discuss, and share books with our children? Books and other media are the windows that can expand, excite, and encourage the minds of our children. It is our job to provide time, opportunity, and models, which support the desire to become lifelong learners. ■

NEWS NOTES

Readers Catch the Errors To Win CAG T-shirts

In the September issue of the *Communicator*, we invited young readers to find a spelling error in their pullout section and win a CAG T-shirt. Here are our winners!

Readers who spotted the extra 'l' in "million" were

Andrew Chung, Los Angeles
Joshua Holz, Morongo Valley
Daniel Santos, West Covina

Three readers caught "chockful" for "chock-full." *Chockful* is actually acceptable, but since Webster's lists it as a second spelling, we had to reward their observations.

Agnes Chu, San Diego
Gail Schein, Sunnyvale
Dan Monteleone, Valencia

And the reader who caught the extra "s" in "class" was

Georgia Duan, Beverly Hills

Congratulations to our winners! Your T-shirts are in the mail!

New CAG Publications

Look for four new CAG titles at the CAG annual conference.

A Guidebook for Teaching Gifted Students provides answers to quetions most frequently asked by teachers of the gifted as well as characteristics of the gifted. Current resources and a glossary of terms make this publication a must for teachers as well as parents.

Gifted Students At Risk assists in identifying and planning programs for at-risk gifted children including the culturally diverse, migrant populations, homeless, new immigrants, and the physically abused.

In Search of Six, by the California State Department of Education and CAG, describes what students need to obtain a "6" on a rubric.

FROM THE EDITOR **VICKI BORTOLUSSI**

1996. A new year. 1996. A new *Communicator*. With the theme of the Literacy for the 21st Century, it is with honor and pride that we, the *Communicator* editorial board, begin anew. Deeply committed to the education of the gifted child, our goal is to encourage the expansion of this commitment by others as we strive to make the *Communicator* more readable by more readers. We want to connect with parents, students, educators, and even a larger community. For it is through this connecting that understanding, commitment, and support can deepen.

Connecting, through reading the *Communicator*, meeting in person, or interacting through the media, is another dimension of literacy, an increasingly important aspect. Literacy is the ability to read or write. Literacy is the ability to communicate. Reading, writing, and communicating today can be done through a variety of media. Literacy is knowledgeability or capability. What does it mean to be literate today? What will it mean to be literate in the 21st century as technology transforms our means to be literate. And what does all of this mean for the gifted individual? Thus, the winter issue of the *Communicator* uses literacy as its theme with implications for the gifted.

California's response to an illiterate population is discussed in the lead article by Diane Levin and Catherine Barkett. Marilyn Morrison provides parent perspectives through articles dealing with what parents can do, and through questions and answers from Barbara Clark on how brain potential can be maximized.

Can a gifted student be illiterate? Kathie Aihara's piece addresses the oxymoron or reality. Angel Barrett's pieces examine how to nurture nonreaders as well as other specific curriculum strategies teachers can use to enhance literacy. Sandra Kaplan also takes a look at the role language plays in literacy as does Robbie Wedeen's article on bilingual literacy.

Educators Bill Raabe and Lisa Heimlich each provide teachers' personal perspectives on teaching literacy to gifted students. Gifted students can play a hands-on role in becoming more literate through participation in the Young People's Pullout section. All *Communicator* readers can become more computer literate through Judy Lieb's TechNet primer and she also gives us a glimpse of libraries of the future.

Wishing you a happy New Year with a new *Communicator* designed to provide a differentiated approach to increasing literacy. A New Year's resolution. A promise to be fulfilled. ■

COMMUNICATOR WANTS A BIT OF YOUR *BYTE*

Editors currently seeking articles for next issue

The Spring 1996 issue of the *Communicator* will feature articles pertaining to the dawning of the computer age and its potential impact on gifted and talented students.

Many of you professionals, educators, parents, and students may have some interesting *bytes* of information about innovative lessons or units using technology, software, and games targeted for advanced learners. Or perhaps you may simply wish to pass along some interesting advice, guidance, or support to other people trying to keep up with the hottest and the latest in the "tech war."

If you would like to submit an article to be reviewed for possible publication in the *Communicator*, the deadline is Monday, January 22, 1996. Please send a double-spaced, typed copy of your manuscript plus a 3.5-inch disk with a "soft copy" of your article in any word processing program to:

Lisa Heimlich
CAG *Communicator*
Associate Editor for Special Projects
1929 Fremont Avenue,
South Pasadena, CA 91030

All submissions will be recognized with a follow-up letter, but the Editorial Board cannot guarantee acceptance of any article for publication.

Other upcoming issue themes will be *Reflections/Goals*, *Politics*, and *Multiple Intelligences*. Contact the editors for further information. ■

MEET THE *COMMUNICATOR* EDITORIAL BOARD

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, CURRICULUM

ANGEL BARRETT, gifted program advisor for the Los Angeles Unified School District, taught gifted bilingual students and was a coordinator of a highly gifted magnet school. A writer for newspapers and magazines for 10 years, she ran her own public relations firm and has written one book and a second is in progress. Her masters in educational administration is from CSULA. She graduated from Arkansas State University in zoology and also received a teaching credential from UCLA. She wants to develop user friendly material for the *Communicator* which will highlight exciting and positive practices which exist in today's schools. She also plans to include current research, theory, and innovation to improve schools.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, CHILDREN'S TOPICS

LINDA BRUG, a middle school language arts and social studies teacher for 20 years, has taught gifted children for 10 years. A graduate of Pepperdine University, she has presented at many conferences, including CAG conferences, and has been published in journals including the *Communicator*. She has two children, ages 9 and 13. Linda is creating a section for young people in the *Communicator* which will include a focus on literature. She is interested in being part of a publication that reaches students, parents, and teachers.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, SPECIAL PROJECTS

LISA HEIMLICH, herself a graduate of gifted education programs, has edited various publications. She teaches gifted students at a bilingual magnet school in East Los Angeles and has studied with Dr. Sandra Kaplan at USC. She is a graduate of the USC School of Journalism. Lisa is interested in providing greater opportunities for teachers to publish ideas for depth, complexity, novelty, and acceleration. She is working on her master of science in education at USC in curriculum, gifted and bilingual education.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, TECHNOLOGY

JUDY LIEB, a graduate of CSUF and USC, has just been awarded her Doctorate in Education from USC. She is Coordinator of GATE, Educational Technology, and Media Services in the Fullerton School District. She has taught at CSUF and in the Buena Park School District. She was also Instructional Television Staff Development Specialist at a PBS station in Orange County. Active in Computer-Using Educators (CUE), Judy has served as a state board member for six years as well as conferences chairperson. She was a founding member of the Orange County affiliate of CUE and is currently on the CUE Regional Planning Committee for the Spring CUE Conference. Judy's vision for the *Communicator* is to let people know about the wide variety of technical resources which are available. A parent of a gifted student, she is also interested in giving back to CAG what it has given her over the years.

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, PARENT TOPICS

MARILYN MORRISON has two children enrolled in the Highly Gifted Program at Carpenter Avenue Elementary School in Studio City, and has served as the co-chair of the program's parent support group for the past three years. She is also the co-editor of the school's newsletter and a member of the high school complex's instructional cabinet. A graduate of Stanford University, Marilyn believes that by communicating accurate information and dispelling the many myths about giftedness, the *Communicator* can give parents the tools to enlighten those around them while advocating the rights of gifted children. ■

PARENTS PROMOTING LITERACY

BY MARILYN MORRISON

Literacy is traditionally defined by our school systems as proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking, but the path to literacy does not stop at the school gate. It can and must be developed at home, with parents as their child's first teachers. The challenge is that with television, computers, and other new technology vying for our children's attention, the emphasis on traditional literacy is often lost. Without being skilled in the use of words, however, our children will not succeed in the next century. As parents, we can reinforce these basic literacy skills through everyday activities, often without our children even knowing they are "learning." We asked a number of parents across the country, "What have you done to promote literacy in your home?"

One of the more obvious ways to promote literacy at home is to introduce your children to books by reading to them when they are young. What is less obvious, though, is the idea of reading to your children even after they are capable of reading to themselves. Karen Fogel, Massachusetts' mother of a sixth-grader and a fourth-grader, noticed that when she briefly stopped her bedtime story ritual with her children, it closed down the opportunity for discussion. Now, she vows to continue reading to her children for as long as possible, as well as continuing her practice of reading some of the same books they are reading in school so that they are able to discuss them together.

Linda Pillsbury, of Pasadena, explains that bedtime is a good time to read historical fiction to her daughters, ages 11 and 7, because she is available to answer their questions. The very act of choosing a book that interests all three of them is an additional lesson in compromise and cooperation.

These parents share the philosophy expressed by Betz Critchley, an English teacher at Fallbrook High School and the mother of three teenagers. There are no rules about what her children can read, whether it's comic books, fantasy stories, contemporary fiction, or the American Girl catalog. Parents can also reinforce reading skills by encouraging children to read recipes, craft instructions, restaurant menus, game rules, and even the TV listings. My own mother, Carol Morrison, used to assign her four children to "navigation duty," asking them to read road signs, store directories and food labels in the supermarket.

In my house, a simple learning tool turned out to be placing magnetic alphabet letters on the refrigerator, allowing my children (now 11 and 8) to experiment with different letter combinations and to practice spelling. Subscribing to children's magazines such as *Ranger Rick* and National Geographic's *World* has also been a treat for both of my kids; they look forward each month to receiving new issues in the mail, and read them from cover to cover. And don't forget the good old-fashioned public library—it is the least expensive way to provide your children with endless reading material, encouraging them to try out different genres and authors, and teaching them valuable research techniques. My children got their own library cards as soon as they could write their names, and over the years they've checked out hundreds of books.

Listening skills are sometimes harder to promote; as Betz Critchley observes, "we've become a visually stimulated society." Her family made a tradition of learning by listening when they invented silly songs out of information their kids needed to remember, such as the multiplication tables or facts about the Gold Rush. My children and I have begun listening to "books on tape" in the car on the way to school—Sherlock Holmes short stories is our most recent success.

Parents have to be especially diligent to combat our nation's declining emphasis on writing skills. In the Pillsbury household, where both parents are writers, the children are given many opportunities to write, from grocery lists to stories to accompany their drawings. My own attempts to bolster my children's writing skills include teaching them to write thank-you notes, and even assigning "essays" when they are angry or have done something wrong. This avoids shouting matches and gives them the opportunity to organize their thoughts and express their feelings.

> " television computers and other new technology vying for our children's attention... "

Sometimes our gifted children don't seem to need much encouragement in the verbal arena, but it is important to recognize opportunities at home to hone those skills. Linda Pillsbury and her daughters sometimes substitute poetry reading at bedtime, with each child choosing a poem to read out loud. Another activity that is rewarding on many levels is Karen Fogel's tradition of taking turns with her children telling the stories behind the photos in

the family album. They describe what was going on in the picture, and who else was at the event but is not shown in the photograph, nourishing family memories as well as their storytelling skills. To develop her children's speaking skills, Betz Critchley often let them explain the rules of games to her, noting that "it's important to sometimes let the child be the teacher...some concepts come home to them in this way."

My husband and I have even discovered a way to turn watching television into a tool for teaching literacy: we rent movies on videotape, watch them together as a family, and then discuss the plot, characters, and themes. We have been able to expose our children to some classic films, such as *Lilies of the Field*, *Ben Hur*, and *The Miracle Worker*, as well as enjoying remakes of great stories like *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Black Beauty*. The immediate impact is on their listening and speaking skills, but we are also giving them insight into the writing and storytelling process. With *The Secret Garden*, we went one step further, introducing our daughter first to the book, then to the musical stage play, followed by the made-for-TV Hallmark Hall of Fame version, and, finally, last year's motion picture adaptation. Our "compare and contrast" discussions were fascinating!

These ideas are only a fraction of the ways parents can ensure that their children grow up to be literate citizens. The one thing each of the parents we interviewed had in common was, as Betz Critchley put it, "we're all readers." The children in these homes all see their parents reading and talking about books, and share in the excitement of discovering and using words. ■

MARILYN MORRISON is the parent of two gifted children. She is the *Communicator* Associate Editor for Parent Topics.

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Games are a great way to improve children's skill with words, and offer the added bonus of being a natural opportunity for families to interact and share a fun experience. These are some of the games parents and teachers have recommended for their emphasis on literacy:

A.S.A.P. (University Games) - After being given a category (such as "fruits," "something green," or "TV shows"), players name words beginning with a designated letter of the alphabet. For younger children, simplify the game by just asking them to name something in the category.

BALDERDASH (Parker Brothers) - Players make up definitions of words and try to guess the correct definitions. This is a great exercise in creative writing. It familiarizes children with parts of speech and components of a convincing definition.

BOGGLE (Parker Brothers) - Players list as many words as they can find among the random assortment of letters in the cube tray. *Boggle Junior* is designed for younger kids.

SCRABBLE (Milton Bradley) - It's a classic, but still one of the best games to build vocabulary and spelling skills. Try playing in teams, pairing adults with younger children.

TABOO (Milton Bradley) - Players take turns trying to get their teammates to say the secret word without mentioning any of five related but "forbidden" words listed. Recommended for ages 12 and up, this is a great family game which can be adapted for younger kids. This game builds vocabulary.

CAR GAMES

Many parents have discovered that playing word games in the car can make a long drive go by quickly, while cutting down on backseat bickering and exercising brain cells. Completely free and portable, games such as these recommended favorites can also be played while standing in line, or sitting in waiting rooms:

THE NEIGHBOR'S CAT - Each player completes the sentence "The neighbor's cat is a _____ cat" with an adjective beginning with a different letter of the alphabet. Everyone can have a turn on the same letter ("The neighbor's cat is an awful/avaricious/awesome cat") or, for a faster game, each person can use the next letter in the alphabet ("...an alluring/benevolent/caring cat").

LICENSE PLATES - Players try to think of words containing the three letters in a license plate. The letters must remain in order; for example, the license plate "CDR" could provide "commander," "cider," and "cauldron." Take turns until no one can think of any more words, then choose a new license plate.

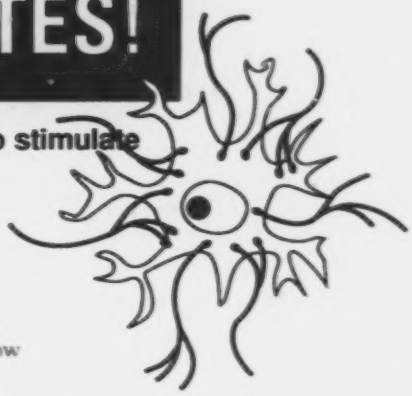
—Marilyn Morrison

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BY MARILYN MORRISON & BARBARA CLARK

GROW THOSE DENDRITES!

What parents can do to stimulate their child's brain



Research shows that the human brain continues to grow throughout a person's life. We asked Dr. Barbara Clark, Professor of Special Education, California State University at Los Angeles and author of *Growing Up Gifted: Developing the Potential of Children at Home and at School* (Merrill, 1992) to share her insights into what parents can do to stimulate their children's brains.

Q How important is a child's environment in maximizing brain potential?

A No matter what the genetic program contains, it can't be brought out and utilized unless the environment gives the opportunity for that to happen. It's a combination of genetics and environment, neither of which can function without the other.

Q How does the expression "use it or lose it" apply to brain growth?

A The way the brain operates, if you are not actually stimulating and progressing in growth, you are regressing. You cannot maintain what you have.

Q What parts of the brain are the most important to stimulate?

A It's important to be very balanced and to have all parts of the brain as optimally developed as possible. Emotions can shut down the cortical function, and, if you're not using any of your intuitive function, you're missing out on many of the higher-level thinking processes.

Q What activities can parents incorporate into their daily lives to stimulate a child's brain growth?

A It all begins with attitude. It comes from the idea that you believe that the child needs stimulation and that you believe the child is a person of dignity who has a growing intellect. If you have this attitude of actually providing as much as you possibly can enthusiastically, and with great love and care and positive regard, almost anything you do will add. By engaging the youngster in a lot of different opportunities for learning, you are making the brain more effective and more efficient.

Q How can parents demonstrate this attitude?

A Modeling is absolutely the most profound way of learning. You have to love learning. You have to be involved in growth and development of yourself. Then, almost anything you do to grow allows the youngsters to grow. What you're working toward is developing children who love learning and do it for themselves, and you have to show that that's a great thing. A curious thing happens: the more you actually get involved in learning and growing, the more the people around you seem to have permission to learn and grow. Sometimes taking care of yourself is the best way to help somebody else.

Q Are there particular times in a child's development when it's especially important to stimulate brain growth with activities like reading?

A Reading is an extremely important factor because of the many opportunities it provides, but also because the brain uses a lot of different functional areas in the reading process. There is a period early on, between about 18 months and 3 years, when it's very easy for a child to learn to read. Exposure during that period of time would be really im-

portant, such as the parent reading to the child, reading around the child, or setting up activities that require the use of words.

Q. Are there some kinds of stimulation that parents should not use?

A. The brain goes into a scan mode with TV and computers, anything that you are passively receiving. Lots of violence and negativity creates negative situations. It's the wrong kind of excitement and stimulation, and can be much more damaging than we think. It's especially important with younger children because of the plasticity of brain cells at that age. The brain takes in whatever you present to it; unfortunately, it doesn't reject negative stimulation.

Q. Is there a part of the brain that usually doesn't get stimulated?

A. We have in each of the neural cells so many, many possible connections and we only use a very small percentage of the potential of all those connections. We could do far more complex work; we could be involved in far more challenging kinds of things, creative kinds of things, synthesis of a lot of different sorts of ideas. Children who are allowed to pursue things to the level of their interest and then take off on something new will pick up so much more because all of those little pursuits and passions eventually come to a point where they tie together. People have this idea that they have to teach everybody to come to closure all the time, meet the deadlines, fit in. There's plenty of that going on at school; parents need to provide the space not for "you have to finish everything you start" but rather "explore the world."

Q. What's the impact of stress on brain growth?

A. It blocks the flow through the corpus collosum; within the limbic system, if it gets too high, it causes biochemicals to flood the cortex and literally shuts down higher-level thinking. Stress can induce a lot of diseases that could have been prevented by self-healing and it attacks the immune system dreadfully. But it is, in fact, a part of life. What you really need is to give children some tools to take care of the stress that they're feeling.

Q. When does brain growth stop?

A. There is no point in your life at which you can't actually become more intelligent. Studies of people in their 70s and 80s show new brain growth.

Q. What is the most important thing parents need to know about the recent findings in brain research?

A. The notion that this is a dynamic process and it is either progressing or regressing always. It's very dynamic. It's never static. It's never finished. It's never completed. We don't even know what human beings are capable of yet. The cognitive will grow along with the other opportunities you give: emotional, social, intuitive. All these are important, too.

SELECTED RESOURCES

Clark, B. (1992) *Growing up gifted: developing the potential of children at home and at school* (4th ed.). New York: Macmillan.

Caine, R.N. & Caine, G. (1991). *Making connections: teaching and the human brain.* Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. 1250 N. Pitt Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

MARILYN MORRISON is the *Communicator* Associate Editor for Parent Topics.

DR. BARBARA CLARK is Professor of Special Education, California State University at Los Angeles.

To Be American

When I think of America I think of...

the ice cream man ringing his bell down my street,

waffles on the table and dew on the lawn,

the Statue of Liberty, her torch high

When I think of America I feel

proud

independent

warmth

When I think of America I think of

me

—Ryan Genovese, age 12
Grade 7, DeAnza Middle School, Ventura
Linda Brug, teacher

THE ILLITERATE GIFTED STUDENT: OXYMORON OR REALITY?

BY KATHIE AIHARA

Reis and Renzulli (1991) define giftedness as having three characteristics: *above average ability* (including high intelligence), *high task commitment* (including motivation), and *creativity* (the ability to formulate and apply new ideas). The *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* (1981) defines illiterate as to be unable to read and write.

So what would it mean to be an illiterate gifted student? There could be several interpretations.

REDEFINING THE PARAMETERS

Dr. Stephen Krashen (1993) states that there are few total illiterates, people who have been through the educational system and are completely unable to read and write. Nearly everyone can read and write, but the illiterate cannot read and write well enough to handle the complex demands of modern society.

Because some students may be illiterate and because giftedness is traditionally based on academic achievement, these students may not be recognized as gifted.

However, Dr. Howard Gardner, Professor of Education at Harvard University, theorizes that all individuals are capable of at least seven different methods of processing information which he classifies as linguistic, logical-mathematical, intrapersonal, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and interpersonal intelligences. These intelligences have enabled us to identify students based on more than solely intellectual giftedness.

THE MISIDENTIFIED GIFTED

Because educators may have preconceived notions of how an illiterate student looks and acts, a student who cannot read or write is easier to identify in traditional ability-based groups. Whitmore & Maker (1985) note that stereotypic expectations for people with disabilities frequently prevent others from noticing their abilities. The gifted student does not fit into the typical category of a nonreader.

THE MYTHICAL GIFTED

Another assumption is that gifted students excel in all areas.

Therefore, students identified in another category, for example, musical talent, may simply be expected to be good academic students and the discrepancy may go unnoticed. The students may be praised and encouraged for their talents while their weaknesses are overlooked.

THE CAMOUFLAGED GIFTED

This student slides through school, camouflaging an inability to read. The student survives by paying careful attention in class and relying on friends (Krashen, 1993).

This student may be an audio learner and, therefore, able to discuss characters and plots in depth without actually reading the literature. Under these conditions, a student who contributes to class discussions and is able to respond to questions may pass as a reader.

THE UNDERACHIEVING GIFTED

The essential foundation for literacy is parent-child interaction: talking, providing experiences, and reading aloud. Exposure to print in the natural course of everyday life develops language and reading for meaning. Some gifted students may not have had the experiences necessary for literacy development.

Inappropriate school programs and negative self-images and attitudes toward school can also contribute to reading failure. "When a student shows a negative attitude toward school and self, any special abilities that he or she has are likely to be overlooked," (Hallahan & Kauffman, 1994, p. 467).

Research is growing on the underachieving gifted student. Whitmore (1986) suggests that lack of motivation to excel is usually the result of a mismatch between the student's motivation, characteristics, and opportunities provided in the classroom.

PROGRAM STRATEGIES

Educational considerations for an effective gifted program include:

- accommodation for advanced cognitive skills;
- instructional strategies consistent with learning styles of gifted students;
- flexible grouping;
- opportunities to excel in the area(s) of giftedness as well as specific reading instruction;
- appropriate, differentiated reading programs;
- nurturing social climate;
- demonstration and modeling of reading by the teacher and peers; and
- relevant and challenging curriculum reflective of the students, personal interests.

In addition, the language experience approach tied to the student's area of giftedness is an effective method. Not only is the student's own language involved, but reading and writing for meaning is learned.

Shared reading using big books, overhead projectors, and pocket charts are helpful.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Krashen (1993) claims that free

voluntary reading (FVR) is part of the cure to illiteracy. Research proves that people who read for pleasure show improved reading comprehension, writing style, spelling, vocabulary and grammar.

All students need to be aware of, and know how to apply, learning strategies while reading. This learning requires self-confidence and motivation to engage actively in the construction of meaning. Gaskins (1992) proposes a mentor program designed to develop independent learners who not only are aware of cognitive and metacognitive strategies but also have the skill, confidence, and motivation to apply them flexibly where appropriate. A mentor's role in this program is that of an academic coach, advisor, advocate, and friend who, as Daloz (1986) suggests, provides support, challenge, and vision for the students. This situation is ideal for the gifted student, allowing an opportunity to move at the individual's appropriate pace and level.

"While the term illiterate gifted is rare, educators need to recognize the possibility."

While the term illiterate gifted is rare, educators need to recognize the possibility. By knowing each student well enough to appreciate and nurture individual abilities and talents, educators will also be able to identify and foster areas that need to be developed. ■

KATHIE AIHARA teaches at Balboa Gifted/High Ability Magnet and is a Mentor Teacher for the Los Angeles Unified School District. She is Past President of the San Fernando Valley Reading Council.

REFERENCES

Bialostok, S. (1992). *Raising readers: Helping your child to literacy.* Winnipeg, Canada: Penguin Publishers.

Butler, B. & Clay, M. (1982). *Reading begins at home.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Davis, S. J. & Johns, J. L. (1991). "Identifying and Challenging gifted readers." *Illinois Reading Council Journal, 19* (1), 34a–34d.

Dooley, C. (1993). "The challenge: Meeting the needs of gifted readers." *The Reading Teacher, 46* (7), 546–551.

Feldhusen, J. F. & Wyman-Robinson, A. J. (1980). "Super Saturday: Design and implementation of Purdue's special program for gifted children." *Gifted Child Quarterly, 24*, 15–21.

Gaskins, R. W. (1992). "When good instruction is not enough: A mentor program." *The Reading Teacher, 45* (8).

Hallahan, D. P. & Kauffman, J. M. (1994) *Exceptional Children.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Krashen, S. (1993). *The Power of Reading.* Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, Inc.

Reis, S. M. & Renzulli, J S. (1991). "The school-wide enrichment model: A comprehensive development of creative productivity." In N. Colangelo & G. A. Davis (Eds.), *Handbook of Gifted Education* (pp. 111–141),. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Schmidt, B. A. (Chair). (1993). *What good teachers do to help literacy happen: From A to Z.* Costa Mesa, CA: The California Reading Association, Inc.

Teele, S. (19). *Into, through, and beyond the 1990's: combining the multiple intelligences with assessment.* The Renaissance Project.

Weiss, P. & Gallagher, J. J. (1992). *Report on education of gifted.* Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Center.

Whitmore, J. R. & Maker, C. J. (1985). *Intellectual giftedness in disabled persons.* Rockfield, Maryland: Aspen.

NURTURING A NATION OF NONREADERS

TEACHING READING FOR PLEASURE IN A SHOW-ME SOCIETY

BY ANGEL BARRETT

In past generations, children were motivated to read books for relaxation, recreation, and enjoyment. Nothing was more exiting or suspenseful than following along chapter by chapter, anticipating the outcome.

My parents read. So I read. During the summer, my mother made construction paper trees and put one for Daddy, one for me, and one for herself on our closet doors. Every time one of us finished a book, we made an apple to put on the tree. I don't remember what we got if we won, but I remember reading.

My parents finally bought a television set in 1968. I was only allowed to watch two hours a day, one after school and one with my parents in the evening. The TV programs were okay, but not as good as my books.

Today, video games, television, and computers dominate children's lives. According to *NEA Today* (November, 1995), the average child (ages 2–17) spends almost 22 hours a week sitting in front of the television set.

Although the home environment is crucial in developing early literacy skills and reading habits, a teacher can be a catalyst to help students discover the joy of reading for pleasure despite the stiff competition of electronic media and games.

BE A ROLE MODEL

Young children are visual and auditory creatures. They love to hear a good story. Many times, children will seize a book and

make up their own stories. The *Good Dog Carl* series is a favorite with very young children. Each book has only one or two sentences; the rest of the book is beautiful artwork detailing the misadventures of a rottweiller named Carl and the baby he protects.

At Lomita Magnet in Los Angeles—everybody including cafeteria, office, and custodial staff—stops when the bell tone comes over the intercom and reads for about 15 minutes a day. Each Monday, a couple of students announce over the intercom what they are reading and highlights of the book.

Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is especially effective if the students see the adults reading a book they enjoy. SSR is not the time to finish correcting math papers or read the latest bulletin to find out what time the fire drill will occur.

Kathleen Jones at Haddon Avenue in Los Angeles has one of the most extensive classroom libraries I've ever seen. Every day for more than 20 years, she has read to her students whether they are second grade or fourth grade. A particular favorite are the *Encyclopedia Brown* books. Her voice builds the drama and suspense as she models expressionism, intonation, and punctuation for her students.

BUILD SUSPENSE

As a book report alternative, students in my fifth-grade classroom created a commercial for their favorite book.

Another technique I used was to read the first few chapters of a novel, stop at a pivotal point, and then make the book available for check out. This method was especially effective for books for which I had duplicate copies such as core literature books that the students did not read in past grades or that we were not using that year, obsolete textbooks, and multiple copies from Scholastic.

I did the same with movies. I would show a scene from *Little Women* and then place three or four copies of the book on top of the television set.

BRING THE STORY TO LIFE

Continuing to read aloud after the students have begun reading independently is perhaps the most forgotten jewel of reading for pleasure. A good reader or a good storyteller can make the printed page come alive.

Judy Hall at Canterbury Magnet often has students dress up like characters or make puppets.

Judy chose to bring Beverly Cleary's *Ramona* to life. Knowing her first-grade students would identify with Ramona, the bratty little sister of Beezus, Judy planned a series of activities such as role-playing, creating puppets and making a "family photo album."

The students were given 3x5 inch squares of white paper that had been cut around the edges with pinking shears. The students drew snapshots of different characters and scenes from the story. When the snapshots were finished, the class put together a photo album of memorable moments from the book. At Open House, many parents made comments like "My child now owns all the Beverly Cleary Books," or "We spend much more time in the library now since you introduced my son to the Beverly Cleary books."

Students who may be self-conscious to perform or read in front of their own class may be willing to do so in front of younger children. Students who are embarrassed because they are reading below grade level can be heroes to younger children. When I taught four-year-olds in the School Readiness Language Development Program, my class partnered with a fifth/sixth grade transition reading class. My students loved the

YOUNG BOOKWORMS

Gina Battaglia has always liked to read. As a baby, she was fascinated with the colors and shapes of books. The daughter of English teachers, Gina grew up surrounded by books.

"I like to read a lot, and my Dad and I make sure to set time aside each evening to read together for pleasure."

Gina prefers novels about young people who are faced with a variety of problems that they overcome with "intelligence, perseverance, and fairness to others. My favorite book is *Homecoming* by Cynthia Voigt because she makes me feel like I'm right there, watching everything that happens to Dicey and her family."

"There are many advantages to reading books over watching TV. One is that on a plane or car trip, you can't take the TV with you, but you can take a book anywhere, on a trip, to a restaurant, or to the beach. Secondly, a book makes you use your imagination. In books, I can visualize the characters and scenery any way I want."

It's no mystery why eighth grader Araceli "Cheli" Cuevas loves reading. Cheli can't wait to find out whodunnit.

"I like mystery books, especially *Mystery of the Cupboard*. I get excited trying to figure out the ending. I always guess who did it and can't wait to see if I am right or wrong.

Formerly, a Limited English Proficient student, Cheli didn't get interested in reading until sixth grade. "I had to do a lot of reports, so I read a lot. I like reading books better than TV or videos because I can use my own imagination. On television, other people create the story like they imagine it to be; when I read, I create the story the way I imagine it to be."

Someday, the world may be reading Cheli's imagination; she's already decided that she wants to be a newspaper reporter.

Gina Battaglia is a sixth grade students at Paul Revere Math/Science Magnet in Los Angeles. Araceli Cuevas is an eighth grade students at Stevenson Middle School in Los Angeles.

one-on-one reading. Later, the teacher told me how proud her students were that someone wanted to listen to them.

CHOICE AND PERSONAL INTEREST

Bob Demming at Canterbury Magnet used racecar magazines as part of his fourth grade curriculum last year. Using a program called FUNCAR (Fundamental Understanding Naturally Creates Academic Results), students built racecars then conducted experiments to calculate and analyze

Bob Demming's fourth-grade students prepare to race their cars. T o culminate their unit, they were special guests of the Los Angeles Auto Show.

gear ratio, speed, and friction. Students experienced some difficulty in assembling the cars, so they evaluated the directions and rewrote the parts that had been too difficult or confusing.

Sustained Silent Reading is a natural time for both students and teacher to choose a book and read for relaxation and pleasure. Part of Kathleen's homework is for students to read aloud to parents; she provides a sheet where parents write what the child read, number of pages and sign it. I extended this practice to include SSR at home. Using Kathleen's paper, parents could verify that the child had read silently for at least 20 minutes a day.

ACKNOWLEDGE THEIR SUCCESS

Modifying my mother's apple trees, I constructed a large tree on a bulletin board. Students volunteered to cut hundreds of fall leaves at home to fill the board. (I did not tell them what the tree was for until after the leaves were on the tree.)

Every time students finished a book, they took a leaf off the tree. On the leaf, they wrote the book title and author, their name and their table number. Leaves were saved in a bushel basket sitting under the tree.

When all the leaves were gone (about six weeks), we had an ice-cream party. Each table placed their leaves end-to-end on a large piece of butcher paper which we hung outside our classroom to show the entire school how many books we'd read.

Each student received a certificate acknowledging the number of books read (ranged from 1 to 33). Parents received a thank-you certificate for their support.

In October, we harvested pumpkins. (Same concept except that the students took pumpkins from the basket and stapled them onto the board.) In November, students made individual turkeys and added feathers as they read.

With a little assistance, this generation can also appreciate the three Rs: reading, relaxation, and recreation. ■

ANGEL BARRETT is an advisor for the magnet schools of choice in the Office of Student Integration Services, Los Angeles Unified School District. She is the Curriculum Associate Editor for the *Communicator*.

If I Were a Strip of Yarn

If I were a strip of yarn
I would dream of being woven
Warm, silky, soft.

Smooth cotton sweater
Cleaned every day
Dried in the sun
With the warmth of a campfire.

Sometimes I'll be in schools,
On children's warm, small, bony backs,
Off the great cliffs,
I soar to the ground.

In the heavy winds,
Like an eagle to its prey.

If only I were a strip of yarn.

—John Hlebica
Torrey Pines Elementary School
San Diego

Teaching Literacy to Gifted Students

A high school instructor speaks out on meeting the needs of these diverse learners

BY BILL RAABE

The conventional wisdom in education is that anybody can teach gifted students, but that it takes real teachers to teach typical students in the distracting environment of a comprehensive high school. After nine years in a comprehensive high school, and currently in my 14th year in an academic magnet school teaching Advanced Placement (AP) and honors courses, I do not entirely dismiss that old notion.

Teaching in an academically oriented environment is less stressful than teaching in an attitudinally diverse school setting. Talking about justice in *Les Miserables* is more fulfilling to me than explaining the definition of a main character. Meeting with students at lunch or after school to review their college application essays is more enjoyable than patrolling restrooms during my free time. The academic atmosphere at our school is such a strong influence that it does make my job easier. At the same time, it gives us who truly want to teach the chance to do so and can give even an ordinary teacher the opportunity to do extraordinary things.

Teaching at Whitney has given me that chance and the ability to confirm the three simple beliefs that govern all my teaching. The first is that there is nothing I can do that will damage my students. If I try a different approach or a novel or creative idea, and it explodes in my face, the students are intelligent enough to get something from the experience. This eliminates the singlemost debilitating aspect that anyone (not only teachers) faces in life, the fear of failure.

The second is to teach to the highest level. It is a practice that I started in the comprehensive high school and have continued in my current placement. Too often teachers expect every student to get every idea. That is not realistic, in the classroom or in life. I take the approach that every student will get something, according to the student's commitment and academic level. In a gifted class, more students will get more of what I am teaching, but not every student will get everything. My responsibility is to put out as much as I can so that those who can maximize the most challenging opportunity will.

The third is that students learn more from me than from each other, and learn more from me one-on-one than in a group. Cooperative learning and study groups are effective tactics for some instruction, but there is no substitute for an individual conference with the teacher. However, this seems to go against two "principles" of teaching: students need to be busy every minute; and, teachers need to be doing something with the class every minute. Both assumptions were discredited long ago, with individualized instruction, workstations, and other ideas that effectively break the class down into smaller units. Simply stated, the smaller the unit with which the teacher can work, the more effective the instruction. Administrators who understand this concept when working with a population of gifted students and their teachers create successful learning environments.

As a teacher of AP English Literature and Composition, my focus is on preparing students for their AP exams. A significant portion of that preparation concentrates on concise essay writing. In my instruction, I follow the model of an ant, breaking the task down into manageable, smaller parts. Ants, given enough time, could move an entire beach, one grain of sand at a time. That is my approach to writing. I focus on several elements, the first being word choice. I teach my students that the single most important aspect that turns a competent writer into a good (and potentially great) writer is word choice. Precision in language becomes an article of faith; do not settle for a word that just does the job; but, rather, choose a precise word that says exactly what the writer wants to say. When students discover the power of the right word, it reinforces all their hard work on memorizing those SAT vocabulary lists. Only then do they see the connection between vocabulary and writing.

"Precision in language becomes an article of faith;..."

The drawback to such a minute focus on writing instruction is the time factor. I try to meet with every student individually at least once or twice each quarter, and more often if needed. This requires setting priorities and recognizing that some students need my time more than others. It also requires a willingness to meet during lunch or after school. I have even had students fax essays to me at home on a weekend so I could fax suggestions back. (When I was a young teacher, I couldn't understand teachers who stayed in their classrooms late after school; I understand now!) To do the job for gifted students re-

quires more than just the 55 minutes of class time, particularly for seniors with their college application essays. But the investment pays great dividends, for it is through these essays that I learn the most about my students.

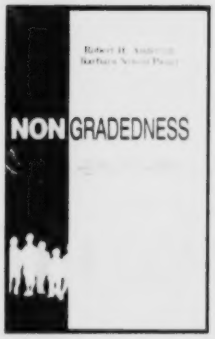
Several years ago I had a female student who seemed to have difficulty concentrating in class, and I was concerned about her ability to succeed. When she came to me with her college essay, I began to understand. Her essay focused on her difficult road to recovery following serious head injuries resulting from having been thrown out of an airplane during a hijack attempt in India. From that moment I knew her struggle and her commitment, and knew how hard she was working to stay current with the class. This knowledge reinforced my dedication to working with her individually; she was a student who needed that extra attention.

On the other hand, one of the realities of teaching gifted students is that some of them do not need us to teach them much of anything. Last year I had a senior whose writing was as good as any I had ever seen. After I read two of his essays, it was clear to me that there was virtually nothing I could teach him. I conferred with him and said exactly that. I told him that if he wanted to confer with me, he should tell me, but that I would not call him for a conference unless there was some unforseen problem in his writing. When he wrote his college essay, he sought my opinion. As I expected, the essay was outstanding and again I could offer no suggestions for improvement. Humility is a good tonic for teachers of gifted students. ■

BILL RAABE is an Advanced Placement and honors English teacher at Whitney High School, a gifted/high ability magnet center, in Cerritos, California. He is also state president of the California Scholarship Federation, a high school honor and service society.

BOOK REVIEW

BY RON FONTAINE



Nongradedness—Helping It to Happen
Robert H. Anderson and Barbara Nelson Pavan
Technomic Publishing Co.
1993, 253 pp

Is the one-room school house coming back?

The authors of *Nongradedness–Helping It to Happen* are such strong proponents of the concept of nongradedness that they openly urge the elimination of "the self destructive habit—the graded school."

The authors define nongradedness as accepting and respecting individual difference in the pupil population, allowing students to develop and be assessed holistically in an open setting, progressing at their own pace.

Other concepts supported by Anderson and Pavan are the ideas of:

- student cooperation replacing competition;
- teacher inservice promoting broad expertise which will permit more site- and even classroom-based management;
- broader thematic interdisciplinary approaches to subject matters at all levels;
- student involvement in curriculum development;
- continuous and alternative methods of assessment;
- team teaching in planning/delivery/assessment.

The authors give considerable attention to research which supports the major idea of nongradedness. The heart of their thesis lies in an interesting chapter on "structured mechanisms" which explores various logistical dimensions of team teaching and multiage grouping. There is careful examination of instructional technique in order to consider the use of cooperative learning and the need to provide for at-risk students. A final chapter provides preparation activities for school or systems headed toward nongradedness. ■

This book was provided for review by the professional book club committee of the California State Department of Education.

RON FONTAINE is a former president of CAG and currently chairs the CAG Political Action Committee.

Peace

We think of a lot when this word
comes to mind.
We think about the people who are
unkind.
We think about graffiti on I-5's wall.
We think about wars that have
terrified all.
But, that is not peace...

Peace is watching a movie with
your family on a Saturday night.
Peace is having a picnic and then
flying a kite.
Peace is days like this when
schools talk about caring.
Peach is hope, joy and love that
you are sharing.

Jimmy Dawdy, age 10
Grade 5, Allen School
Sharon Clunk, teacher

BY LISA HEIMLICH

READ ALOUD TO A GIFTED CHILD?

The research suggests that all children, regardless of ability level, benefit from good modeling

If the goal of schooling is to make children more literate, general wisdom would suggest that students should do more reading. After all, practice makes perfect, right? Not exactly. A review of the research proposes that the road to literacy and fluency in a language must include much more than just independent reading. A variety of traits that comprise good reading and language expression-including habits, comprehension, and enjoyment-are best acquired when a child is read aloud to by good readers.

This same logic can be applied to any skill. Can you pick up a football and throw a perfect spiral without first having seen someone else model it for you? Could you have learned to tie your shoe if no one had ever shown you how? The answer to both of these questions is probably not, and since caretakers and teachers have taught their children and students these and countless other skills for generations, why then should reading be any different? Reading aloud to others should never stop, especially when we become "fluent" readers. Just as there is no "perfect" football player or mathematician, there are no "perfect" reader—everyone has room to improve.

This includes gifted students, previously thought to be exempt from needing "extra help" in reading. On the subject of modeling good reading, Trelease (1989) wrote that since modeled behavior is so crucial to learning, the more often a teacher or parent is seen and heard reading for pleasure and in a meaningful way, the greater the chances of the listener modeling that behavior.

Any classroom teacher who reads aloud to his/her children (of any age) can see the immediate and long-range benefits of this enthusiastic exposure to books and literature. The first step in introducing anyone to a new skill is motivation, and so it makes sense that one of the most researched topics on reading behavior is motivation and inclination. A high school English teacher, Ecroyd (1991) wrote that her readings aloud of good literature prompted her students to read more on their own, to finish or reread those books read aloud in class, and to read other works by those authors. Her findings also show that reading aloud should not just be limited to emergent readers or remedial students. She noted that reading aloud should include gifted or high-achieving students as well, who benefit from reading response journals and extra reflection on literature.

Additionally, students are motivated by read aloud time because of the relationships they develop with teachers, parents, and with the books themselves. Saban (1994) reported on the findings that reading aloud makes children familiar with books and their language. This encourages them to ask questions about words or the plot during the reading, thus putting the pace of the reading into the hands of the child. Warren, Prater, and Griswold (1990) studied the parental role in reading aloud and discovered that the quality of literature, parental style of reading, verbal interaction during and after the story, and opportunities for follow-up activities affect the values derived from read-aloud sessions. When reading aloud is accompanied by oral language and discussion, children appear to benefit from the experience.

Many researchers have studied the impact of reading aloud on reading and listening comprehension and understanding of literary devices and vocabulary. The Commission on Reading stated that the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for eventual success in reading is reading aloud to children. (Anderson, et al., 1985) Surveying the read-aloud practices of elementary teachers, Lickteig (1993) found that read-aloud sessions that provide a purpose and involve the students with follow-up activities enhance the literacy process. She also cited the main reasons why these teachers included read aloud in their daily program: to cultivate a love of reading and learning, to encourage thinking about important issues that might otherwise not be in-

cluded in the curriculum, and for enjoyment and relaxation. However, most researchers have found more immediate benefits of read aloud than these long-range advantages.

A renowned authority on the use of children's literature in the classroom, Huck (1992) identified the values of reading aloud, as well as its impact on writing and the literacy process. The reasons she gives for reading aloud are that children will then associate reading with pleasure and love, will develop larger vocabularies, and will create a schema for how stories work. Children pick up literary devices such as plot, climax, personification, point of view, and symbolism when literature is brought to life by enthusiastic and dramatic readings. Students also have more in-depth responses to literature as motivational activities, and concurrent discussions during the read-aloud sessions encourage higher-order thinking. Huck also advocates a "comprehensive literature program" in the schools, one that includes teachers reading aloud to children in all areas of the curriculum and children's responses to books through discussion, drama, art, and writing.

The primary goal of a literacy program should not only include producing children who not only know how to read, but who also become readers. Gifted children can benefit from these extraordinary experiences just as much as an emergent reader. Creative minds need creative stimuli, and a story brought to life by the caring touch of read aloud could be the impetus for a gifted child to continue to explore new areas of study. And who would not want that? ■

LISA HEIMLICH is a fourth grade teacher at Euclid Avenue Gifted/High Ability Bilingual Magnet School in Los Angeles. She is also the *Communicator* Associate Editor for Special Projects.

REFERENCES

Anderson, R., Hiebert, E., Scott, J., & Wilkinson, I. (1985). *Becoming a Nation of Readers: The Report of the Commission on Reading*. Champaign, IL: Center for the Study of Reading.

Ecroyd, C. (1991). Motivating students through read aloud. *English Journal, 80*, 76–78.

Huck, C. (1992). Literacy and literature. *Language Arts, 69*, 520–526.

Lickteig, M. (1993). Elementary teachers' read-aloud practices. *Reading Improvement, 30*, 202–208.

Saban, A. (1994). A bridge to books: Reading aloud to children in primary education. *Reading Improvement, 31*, 23–27.

Trelease, J. (1989). Jim Trelease speaks on reading aloud to children. *Reading Teacher, 43*, 200–206.

Warren, J., Prater, N., & Griswold, D. (1990). Parental practices of reading aloud to preschool children. *Reading Improvement, 26*, 41–45.

The American Dream

People say if you work hard enough,
you can achieve the American Dream.
But what is the American dream?
Is it a house with a white picket fence,
or a cabin with a stream?
Who is left to decide,
What our dream should be?
Is it the President
or the People,
or maybe the Pope?
There are so many people.
Should we all have the same dream?
Should I hope for the dream of my neighbor,
or the dream of my teacher?
If everyone had a white picket fence,
wouldn't life be dull?
That's what's so great about this land,
The land we call America.
Everyone has a chance,
To have their own dreams.

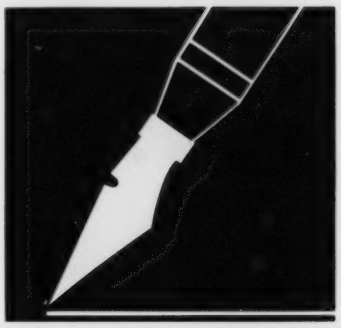
—Jacquie Bugaj, age 13
Grade 8, DeAnza Middle School, Ventura
Linda Brug, teacher

BY LINDA BRUG

AWESOME AUTHORS!

Have you ever wondered how authors get their ideas? How many of their books contain stories that are really about themselves? Here is a list of books about various authors' lives, some modern and some from the past.

After reading about one of your favorite author's life, look at your own life for your own story.



ELEMENTARY (grades 2–5)

Asher, Sandy. *Where Do You Get Your Ideas?*

Brighton, Catherine. *The Brontes.*

Bulla, Clyde Robert. *A Grain of Wheat-A Writer Begins.*

Burleigh, Robert. *A Man Named Thoreau.*

Christelow, Eileen. *What Do Authors Do?*

Collins, David. *To the Point* (E.B. White).

Gherman, Beverly. *Some Writer* (E.B. White).

Giff, Patricia. *Laura Ingalls Wilder-Growing Up in the Little House.*

Greene, Carol. *Emily Dickenson, American Poet.*

Greene, Carol. *Lewis Carroll: Author of Alice in Wonderland.*

Greene, Carol. *Robert Lewis Stevenson.*

Greene, Carol. *Frances Hodgson Burnett* (author of the Secret Garden)

Peet, Bill. *An Autobiography.*

Stanley, Diane. *Bard of Avon* (Shakespeare).

Weidt, Mary Ann. *Oh, the Places He Went* (Dr. Seuss).

UPPER GRADES (grades 5-)

Anderson, William. *Laura Ingalls Wilder.*

Bauer, Marion. *A Writer's Story—From Life to Fiction.*

Buchan, Elizabeth. *Beatrix Potter—the Story of the Creator of Peter Rabbit.*

Byars, Betsy. *The Mom and I.*

Cleary, Beverly. *A Girl From Yamhill.*

Collins, David. *Tales for Hard Times—A Story about Charles Dickens.*

Dahl, Roald. *Boy.*

Fritz, Jean. *Homesick—My Own Story.*

Hurwitz, Johanna. *Astrid Lindgren-Storyteller to the World.*

Krull, Kathleen. Lives of Writers. *What the Neighbors Thought.*

Little, Jean. *Stars Come Out Within.*

MacBride, Roger. *West From Home (letters-1915).*

Markham, Lois. *Lois Lowry.*

Naylor, Phyllis. *How I Came to be a Writer.*

Paulsen, Gary. *Woodsong.*

Peck, Richard. *Anonymously Yours.*

Sutcliff, Rosemary. *Blue Remembered* (autobiography).

Yep, Lawrence. *The Lost Garden* (autobiography).

Which of the following countries do you think has the highest literacy (can read and write)?

a. United States
b. Kenya, Africa
c. Japan
d. Australia

answer: (d) Australia with 100% literacy rate; then Japan with 99%, United States with 98%, and Kenya with 69%

source: CIA World Fact Book 1993

SNOWFLAKES

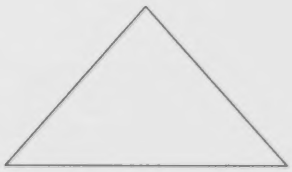
Cutting patterns from paper is a traditional folk art enjoyed for generations. Some of us are able to study snowflakes firsthand as they fall from the sky in the winter. Others of us can only imagine what these tiny pieces of ice crystals really look like. The patterns on page 23 are based on photographs of real snowflakes examined under a microscope.

You might start with the patterns, but then try to create your own. After you've cut your snowflake you can tie it to a package as a tag, use it as greeting card, string a number of them together for a decoration, or frame it and give it as a gift for a special friend.

MATERIALS

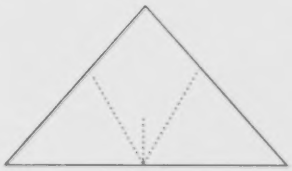
Snowflakes can be made from any material that you can cut and fold. You might use gift wrap, cellophane, newsprint, tissue paper, origami,or plain white paper. (The thinner the paper, the easier it is to cut.) You'll also need a pencil and a pair of sharp scissors.

1. Start with a piece of paper about 9 inches square. Fold your paper diagonally to make a triangle and crease the fold firmly.



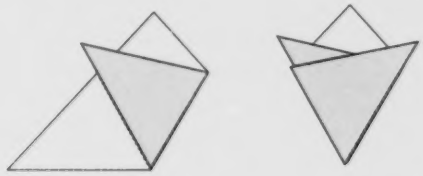
2. Find the center of the folded edge by placing the two end corners together and pinching a crease to mark the center.

3. Now you're going to fold the triangle into thirds. The dotted lines show approximately where to make your 2 folds.

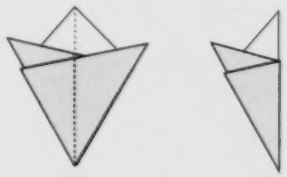


4. Fold one side in and crease firmly. Do the same for the other side.

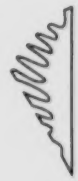
Hint: Before making the folds, some people find it easier to roll the 2 sides in—like making an ice cream cone—to get a more exact idea of where to make the final folds.



5. Fold your paper once more—in half.

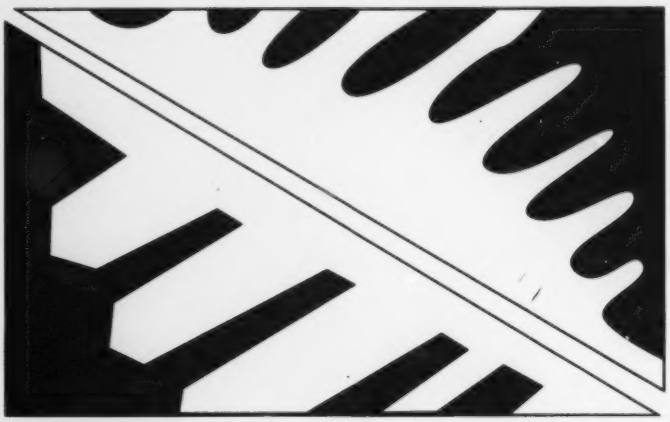


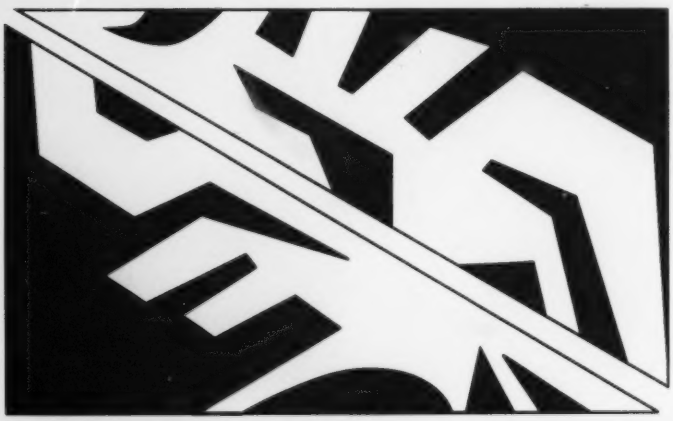
6. Cut apart the wedge shapes on page 23, then cut away the dark areas of each design, keeping the white snowflake as your pattern. If you want to use the patterns more than once, glue them onto heavier paper or cardboard before you cut them out.



7. Put the pattern over your folded shape and trace the design with a pencil. You might need to move the pattern up or down so the pattern edges reach all the way across to the edges of your folded shape.

8. As you unfold your snowflake, bend it backward to remove the creases.





Did you know...?

- Snowflakes occur in an infinite variety of shapes, and no one has ever found two the same. All natural snowflakes are hexagons (six-sided) and are flat transparent ice crystals; rarer forms like needles and columns are sometimes found. Snowflakes come in a variety of sizes. You can find 100 crystals in a one-inch diameter.
- W.A. Bentley was an American farmer who spent every possible moment out in the old, photographing snowflakes through a microscope. Over the course of 40 years he made thousands of photographs of snowflakes.

Going Further On...

- Investigate the formation of snowflakes; gather evidence to support the reasons why each snowflake is different from all others.
- Look at several photographs of snowflakes (as seen under a microscope) and note similarities among them.
- Create a diagram illustrating the sequence of events from the formation of a snowflake until it falls to earth.
- Tell how a snowflake is like a
  - necklace
  - smile
  - computer
  - piece of music
  - camp fire
  - paper airplane

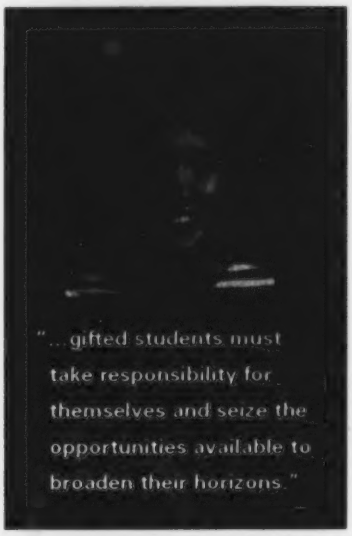
PUBLIC OPINION

BY SARAH MAST

As I scour the store shelves for number two pencils and a notebook that will soon be filled with history notes, I notice that I am not the only student preparing to return to school. Another girl down the aisle is arguing with her mother about the style of backpack she needs. The boy next to me is scanning the back of a package containing an expensive scientific calculator. He appears to be about 13 and I wonder why he needs such an expensive toy for his algebra class.

But, stylish backpacks and impressive calculators are the least of my worries at this time of year. I am preparing for a year of challenging classes and a busy schedule to enhance my college applications as I look down the road to my goal: a top four-year university. During these past two years of high school, my mind has not been preoccupied with the latest trends, but with making the most of my publi school education so that I might compete with those from the private school world.

One may think that public schools have nothing to offer students like me; that they are not demanding enough for college-bound students. Even though teachers and administrators must deal with those students that are at risk of dropping out of school or are planning to go to work right after high school, opportunities are provided for motivated students as well. The gifted students must take responsibility for themselves and seize the opportunities available to broaden their horizons. Students can pursue educational activities through debates or discussions on critical issues, can seek out academic contests offered through county and state education offices, or can organize AP preparation study groups, inviting teachers to facilitate their groups. Other useful activities are SAT preparation courses, school academic teams and clubs that can invite former high school students, business leaders and local professionals to mentor members of the student organization.



"... gifted students must take responsibility for themselves and seize the opportunities available to broaden their horizons."

One of the many positive aspects of attending one of the public schools in my town is that, even though I am challenged, I have ample time to be involved in several school and community-based activities. I will be able to play on the tennis team, be an officer in two clubs and be an editor for my school's newspaper. During the time that I am not on the tennis court or pasting up my newspaper page, I can be found volunteering at the hospital or serving on various community boards in Visalia.

By this time, the boy has abandoned the scientific calculator and the girl and her mother have settled on one of the backpacks, and I am left alone in the aisle. My thoughts are on the future—not just next week or next year and not just for myself, but for other gifted students wanting to make the most of their education. It doesn't matter to me if I have the fanciest calculator or the most stylish backpack on campus, but it matters to me how hard I work to make the most of my public school education. ■

SARAH MAST is a student making the most of her education at Redwood High in Visalia, CA

CALLING ALL STUDENTS!

Send us original stories, poetry, opinions, comic strips, art work, puzzles or ideas of what you would like to see in this section. Be sure to tell us your name, age, grade, your school, and the name of your teacher.

MAIL
Mail your work to Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Dr., Ventura, CA 93003.

BILINGUAL LITERACY

ACHIEVING POST-MAINSTREAMING PROFICIENCY

BY ROBBIE WEDEEN

Many of the same instructional practices used with gifted students are the recommended teaching strategies for students struggling to acquire English language literacy.

These recommendations are hardly surprising since gifted and talented education has long been at the forefront of pedagogical leadership. Hands-on activities, meaning-centered instruction, building on big ideas, studying subjects in depth, and the thinking curriculum are terms and ideas teachers of gifted and talented students pioneered long before they became fashionable.

Just as gifted students thrive in an enriched learning environment, gifted English-language learners, whose capabilities are often overlooked by English-only teachers, have opportunities to excel when classroom practices encourage the use of multiple intelligences.

With *It's Elementary!* in 1992, California led the reform movement in education by adopting a thinking curriculum, in which students have a meaning-based, hands-on program and learn academic subjects in greater depth. High achievement is expected by all students, including those whose native language is not English. How can the second-language learner develop equal access to this rigorous curriculum? The dual keys to high achievement for non-native speakers are the delivery of the same challenging, meaning-centered, high-level thinking curriculum in the student's native language, when possible, while at the same time, developing English literacy through English as a Second Language (ESL) to the point where the student can transition to an all English curriculum.

The California Reading Task Force Report has recommended that reading be made the highest priority in California schools. To ensure literacy for all students, the Task Force states that "Every school and district must organize and implement a comprehensive and balanced reading program that is research-based and combines skills development with literature and language-rich activities." The outcome will be for all students to read at grade level by the end of third grade.

Some of the methods for accomplishing this feat include:

- primary language instruction in reading when necessary;
- daily writing assignments;
- classroom libraries of at least 1500 books;
- technology to support reading;
- increased instructional time, staff development in reading methodology;
- team teaching; and
- the development of grade-level standards.

The California Department of Education, in response to various federal court rulings, has mandated the implementation of its State Program for Students of Limited English Proficiency (LEP) which states its goal is "to develop fluency in English in each student as effectively and efficiently as possible; promote students' positive self-concepts; promote cross-cultural understanding, and provide equal opportunity for academic achievement, including, when necessary, academic instruction through the primary language."

Based on research that shows that language minority students are more successful when the primary language is the initial language of literacy, many students are taught in bilingual programs where both the native language and English are used for instruction. For example, the Los Angeles Unified School District offers bilingual programs in Spanish, Armenian, and Korean. One advantage of teaching students to read in their native language is that they have earlier access to works of literature which are more culturally relevant, meaningful, and sensitive in meeting the needs of the child.

In addition to developing the students' academic skills while they are acquiring English, literacy in the students' primary languages makes the transition to English smoother and easier.

A critical component to students' success is a well-developed ESL program which provides them with the necessary English skills to progress.

In the primary grades, teachers concentrate on developing oral language skills first. At about third grade level, or when they have developed intermediate fluency in English, children are ready to start to develop English literacy skills. Many skills in reading easily transfer from one language to another. By the time children are ready to transition, they have developed general strategies, habits, attitudes, knowledge of text structure, rhetorical devices, sensorimotor skills, visual-perceptual training, cognitive functions, and many reading readiness skills which, of course, don't have to be retaught.

Many specific skills, too, transfer especially from Spanish to English. The middle grades teacher, then must fill in the gaps left by the nontransferable skills. Several publishers have realized the need for a reading program that targets these nontransferable items and thus provides a bridge between Spanish reading and English reading. Teachers also have had success using meaningful works of literature tied to thematic units of study in content areas.

Where there are not enough students of a language group to warrant a bilingual program, students are enrolled in a program of English Language Development where they receive daily ESL lessons and where content is delivered using sheltered English.

Reading methods for second-language learners vary. Usually an eclectic approach is taken combining code methods, such as phonics, with meaning methods, such as language experience. Eclecticism involves taking the best of all methods and customizing the program to meet the varied needs of all children in each class. Regardless of the method used, the goal is meaningful comprehension, an essential element in the thinking curriculum.

Barbara Smart, mentor teacher and author of *Pictionary I, II, and III* vocabulary building books, says that her best teaching occurred at a time when she was teaching a large group of newly arrived, Armenian-speaking first and second graders. Smart, who speaks no Armenian, had to come up with a plan to teach the children English and to provide them with appropriate, grade-level curriculum.

By testing the theories of education outlined in the California State Frameworks, Smart found that the methods outlined work exceptionally well with LEP students. Smart applied her knowledge of methodology to create global strategies, to use not only with LEP students, but with all students to foster English language development.

Smart says her students' success was due to the use of an integrated curriculum, which established a natural way for the students to make connections and build understanding. Reading was studied in the context of the larger curriculum with comprehension the main goal. To help with key concepts, Smart incorporated as many types of visual aids and graphic organizers as possible into her lessons. Pictures, realia, hands-on activities, word walls, charts, graphs, flow charts, story maps, and timelines were a regular part of every subject. Topics were covered in depth using thematic instruction. Reading was not an isolated subject relegated to mechanical or repetitive decoding operations, but was applied to meaningful, student-centered experiences. For example, children worked in groups to label their work. In this way, if a student did not know how to write the word, his or her partner could help. Because the meaning was relevant, the students internalized it and were, therefore, able to read their work. For these students, reading became a tool for discovery.

Within a few months, Smart's students were beginning to read. Continually, she promoted understanding by restating ideas, using essential vocabulary, and making connections to prior knowledge. Every lesson was started with an activity, usually brainstorming; and all the children's responses were recorded, making each student feel valued and successful. Smart incorporated lots of writing into all aspects of the curriculum, including math. In this classroom, all activities led to literacy.

Rosa Baum's third-grade students easily transition to English reading. Baum also teaches thematically; so reading and writing occur across the curriculum. Students improve their vocabulary by illustrating all the new English words that occur within the context of the theme and apply the writing process. In addition, she introduces the English phonics skills that were not taught in Spanish reading.

When children learn to read in Spanish, individual sounds are not taught in isolation because the language itself is phonetic, and words are easily read by breaking down the syllables. Because English has many irregularities and phonetic variations, vowel sounds and some consonants such as *j*, *h*, and *g* must be relearned.

Allowing the transferable skills to be maintained, introducing the nontransferable skills in a more structured way, and using the language skills learned throughout the overall curriculum facilitates a smooth transition to English literacy.

How do students who entered U.S. schools in middle school or in high school acquire English literacy? No matter what the age, the process of acquiring English is almost the same. Students progress from basic listening and speaking to reading and writing, and finally to advanced skills in academic language.

Rosemarie Mercado, Bilingual Adviser for Secondary Schools, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), oversees ESL and sheltered instruction for LEP students in middle and high schools. Reading, which used to be taught separately from ESL, is now incorporated. Students usually learn the printed forms with the spoken forms of English words.

Mercado, who taught ESL at Bell High School, employed several strategies to ensure that her students received "comprehensible input." Among the techniques that she incorporated were:

- an emphasis on more formal

language structure;

- an avoidance of slang;
- the use of cognitives whenever possible (For example, instead of saying, "Plug in the projector," she would say "Connect the projector." Students could relate the Spanish "Conectar" to the verb, whereas "plug in" was unfamiliar.);
- the use of the overhead projector as a visual aid;
- the use of manuscript instead of cursive in order to be more consistent with printed text and to be more legible for beginning English learners; and
- the utilization of pictures and visual aids to shelter instruction and introduce vocabulary.

When secondary students have learned basic skills in English, they are integrated into the regular curriculum where they receive subject matter in Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) from teachers trained in second language acquisition. SDAIE instruction incorporates the same techniques as were described in elementary grades:

- vocabulary building;
- use of visuals, realia;
- hands-on activities;
- writing, illustration;
- graphic organizers;
- meaning-centered instruction;
- building on prior knowledge, and accessing higher level thinking skills.

When the students' *academic* (as opposed to conversational) English skills in speaking, reading, and writing have progressed to the same level of fluency as native speakers, the students are mainstreamed into regular classes.

For students to be successful, it is imperative that the thinking curriculum be open to all students, no matter what the language.

On October 16, 1995, students who had entered school with little or no English language skills, and who had reached a level of English literacy equal to that of native speakers, were featured spokespersons at a special recognition ceremony during a LAUSD Board of Education meeting. As two fifth graders explained, first in fluent English, then in fluent Spanish, how they came from their homeland knowing no English, and through the efforts of dedicated bilingual and ESL teachers, were able to achieve English competency, they exemplified more about the success of bilingual programs in two minutes than experts can explain in two hours.

The speakers represented some of the 24,000 Los Angeles students who completed ESL and bilingual programs and were evaluated as proficient in English during the 1994–95 school year.

As teachers adopt the strategies detailed in California's State Frameworks and other reform documents, complete the training necessary to work effectively with second-language learners, and implement the programs mandated by the state, greater numbers of students will successfully walk through the doors of English literacy.

Truly, the successes of the numerous gifted and talented students throughout the State of California demonstrate that the basic principles delineated in *It's Elementary!* are nonlanguage dependent. ■

ROBBIE WEDEEN is an Elementary Bilingual Adviser for the Los Angeles Unified School District. She has been a coordinator of both bilingual and gifted and talented programs.

LANGUAGE LITERACY

In Los Angeles, 46% of the 636,416 students are limited in English proficiency, two-thirds of which are in the elementary grades. Since 1981, this number has risen steadily until it has more than doubled.

Many more children are initially identified as being proficient in English, but also speak another language at home with their families. Still others have learned enough English to be placed in regular academic classes along with native speakers. These students may continue to cope with deficiencies in English academic vocabulary and comprehension.

Native Spanish speakers constitute the majority of these second-language learners, but there are also thousands of children throughout California who speak a myriad of other languages, from Pashto (Afghan) to Visayan (a Philippine dialect), many of which utilize a non-Roman alphabet, making the transition to the English writing system that much more difficult.

Some students come to schools with a great deal of background knowledge and literacy skills in their own language. Others, for example, many speakers of Hmong (from Southeast Asia), come to school with little or no formal education.

The achievement of English literacy is through a systematic program of regular, progressive, high-caliber instruction. ■

T E C H N E T

BY JUDY LIEB & TONY ANDERSON

AN INTERNET PRIMER

WHAT IS THE INTERNET? It seems that one cannot open a newspaper or magazine today without seeing some reference to the Internet. What exactly is this "Internet"? The Internet is a network of connected computers all over the world. These computers are tied together with high speed telephone lines. To connect to the Internet, your personal computer becomes one of the millions of computers "online" which allows the sharing of the many Internet resources. The computer networks on the Internet link together using a common protocol called TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol) which means that it does not matter what type of computer is used to link into the Internet as long the computer can understand TCP/IP, which most can.

HOW DID THE INTERNET GET STARTED?

The Internet began as a network called ARPAnet in the early 1970s. The ARPAnet was a project of the United States Defense Department to construct a network that would survive partial outages and still function. In the 1980s, the National Science Foundation (NSF) built its own network based on ARPAnet to share the resources of five regional supercomputer centers. The NSF later created regional networks so that sites could connect to neighbors via a daisy-chain type of network. Researchers discovered that the network was a useful tool in sharing resources other than the supercomputer centers. Until recently, the basic infrastructure of the Internet has been supported by public funds. Currently it is supported by private sector partners such as MCI.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ON THE INTERNET?

There are vast resources on the Internet. Williams (1995) lists a sample of activities for teachers and students which include the following.

Global Electronic Mail

People can connect with others all over the world without regard to time zones. Teachers can connect with others to share projects and ideas. Students can interact with students in another state or country on collaborative projects. Students can also discuss key issues with scholars or experts in the field.

Research

The Internet can be used to locate pictures, sounds, digitized movies, and documents from all over the world. The latest weather maps are on the Internet as well as the resources of the Smithsonian. University and public libraries can be searched via the Internet. Sites such as NASA and JPL have the latest photographs from space expeditions. Johns Hopkins Center for Talented Youth has an Internet site where parents can access information on programs available. Computer and software vendors often provide technical information and online assistance for use of their products. There is so much information on the Internet that it is easy to become overwhelmed. However, there are search engines in which keywords can be typed and a list of sites with the requested information appears on the computer screen. Then you use your computer to access the information you need.

File Exchange

The Internet supports the sending and retrieval of files which contain documents, images, and sounds. The latest versions of free software can be downloaded to your computer.

Discussion Groups

Internet users discuss many topics. There are listservs and newsgroups which forward messages to everyone who has subscribed to the group. On a California administrator's listserv, someone posted a message asking for help with a software program and had several answers within 24 hours.

Live Conferencing

"Live" chats are possible on the Internet where people can debate issues. Using a program called *CU-SeeMe* and with the attachment of a small $100 camera to your computer, live video conferencing can take place. Students can demonstrate their project to others or see another classroom's science experiment.

HOW DO I ACCESS THE INTERNET?

Organizational or commercial services such as America Online, CompuServe, Prodigy, and Microsoft Network provide Internet access as part of their overall services. There are also Internet service providers which provide fee-based access to the Internet such as Netcom, PSI, and

many smaller community based services.

To access these services, an up-to-date computer equipped with a high speed modem (at least a 14.4 kbs, but 28.8 kbs is preferable), color graphics capabilities, a color monitor, and at least 8 mb of RAM are needed. Older computers, such as those with 286 or 68000 processors, do not have the processing power to make using the Internet an enjoyable experience. The modem is used to connect the computer to the phone lines, so the higher the speed, the faster the connection.

In addition to a connection and computer, Internet software is also needed. This software can often be downloaded from the Internet itself and some are available in commercial versions or on disks included with books about the Internet.

The World Wide Web (WWW) is a collection of Internet sites that can be accessed through graphical software using hypertext links. Users point and click on hypertext to go to that site. WWW sites are located using Web browser software such as Netscape, MacWeb, or Mosaic. All kinds of information types are found on the World Wide Web including text, graphics, video, and audio. The World Wide Web has several different kinds of search engines available for public use that allow users to type in keywords to locate Internet sites having the sought-after information.

The first page of a WWW site is called the Home Page for that site and usually has hypertext links to other pages or other related World Wide Web sites.

Gopher sites are computer servers on the Internet which are frequently text based and can be located with a Web browser or software such as TurboGopher. Gopher searches present menus along the way and the user selects the items until the desired file is found.

WHAT ABOUT SAFETY?

The Internet is an educational tool, but there are also Internet sites which are inappropriate for children. There is a danger that a student (or adult for that matter) may encounter an unacceptable site or unknowingly provide information or arrange a meeting which could be unsafe. However, this danger has been frequently exaggerated by the media. The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the Interactive Services Association has produced an informative booklet called *Child Safety on the Information Highway*. They list seven guidelines for parents whose children are online. These guidelines are appropriate for all online users.

1. Never give out identifying information in a public message and make sure you know who you are giving information to in an e-mail message.
2. Get to know the services your child uses. Find out ways to block out objectional material.

INTERNET GLOSSARY

Addressing. A system for identifying the sending device and destination device for information traveling on a network. On the Internet, addressing is by IP, or Internet Protocol, number.

Baud. A measure of modem speed. The rate at which data transmitted from one computer to another over a modem.

Connect time. The amount of time spent connected to an information service, or directly to the Internet.

Daisy chain. The way a group of devices are connected to the host device. The first device is connected to the host, the second device is connected to the first, etc.

Electronic mail (e-mail). A service which allows users to send and receive messages using computers.

FTP. An abbreviation for File Transfer Protocol, a protocol that determines how files are transferred from one computer to another. Commonly used to retrieve files and programs from archives residing on FTP servers. See Server and Protocol.

Gopher. A menu-based way of exploring information resources on the Internet. Gopher servers on the Internet provide access to files for computers with Gopher software.

Hypertext. Interactive text on a computer screen (usually underlined) that, when clicked on, takes the user to the location indicated by the text. For example, if U.S. Senate Web Page appeared on the computer screen, a click on the text would take the user to the U.S. Senate Internet site.

Internet address. The address of a computer on a network.

Listserv. An automated mailing list on a specific topic so that messages are sent to all who sign up to electronically receive the information. Subscribers can also send information to others on the mailing list.

Modem. An acronym for modulator/demodulator. A device that links a computer to other computers and/or information services via telephone lines.

Newsgroup. A discussion group on a computer network devoted to talking about specific topics. Messages are sent to a news server where everyone can access them.

Network. Interconnected, but individually controlled, computers which use hardware and software to share data,exchange electronic mail, and perform other tasks.

Protocols. Rules that determine how and when information is transmitted on a network. FTP is an example of a protocol as is TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol).

Server. A computer running software that allows it to provide a service to another computer. Other computers contact the server using specific software. For example, FTP servers allow computers running FTP software to copy files from the server to that computer.

Service provider. A commercial or noncommercial organization which provides access to the Internet. A service provider is necessary for an Internet connection. Some examples of Internet service providers are America On-Line, CompuServe, Prodigy, and CSUNet.

WHAT IS THE INTERNET? It seems that one cannot open a newspaper or magazine today without seeing some reference to the Internet. What exactly is this "Internet"? The Internet is a network of connected computers all over the world. These computers are tied together with high speed telephone lines. To connect to the Internet, your personal computer becomes one of the millions of computers "online" which allows the sharing of the many Internet resources. The computer networks on the Internet link together using a common protocol called TCP/IP (Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol) which means that it does not matter what type of computer is used to link into the Internet as long the computer can understand TCP/IP, which most can.

HOW DID THE INTERNET GET STARTED?

The Internet began as a network called ARPAnet in the early 1970s. The ARPAnet was a project of the United States Defense Department to construct a network that would survive partial outages and still function. In the 1980s, the National Science Foundation (NSF) built its own network based on ARPAnet to share the resources of five regional supercomputer centers. The NSF later created regional networks so that sites could connect to neighbors via a daisy-chain type of network. Researchers discovered that the network was a useful tool in sharing resources other than the supercomputer centers. Until recently, the basic infrastructure of the Internet has been supported by public funds. Currently it is supported by private sector partners such as MCI.

WHAT CAN YOU DO ON THE INTERNET?

There are vast resources on the Internet. Williams (1995) lists a

UNDERSTANDING INTERNET ADDRESS

To access services on the Internet, specific kinds of addresses are used. One common address form is called a Uniform Resource Locator, or URL. Here is an example of a URL to access a World Wide Web page at the Fullerton School District:

http://www.fsd.k12.ca.us/fsd_homepage.html

http:// *type of service*

www.fsd.k12.ca.us/ *machine address*

fsd_homepage.html *file to retrieve*

Types of Internet Services

http:// = a web server address

gopher:// = a gopher server address

telnet:// = a remote computer to log into and operate remotely

ftp:// = an ftp server used to distribute files and programs

Machine Address

To access a computer on the Internet, the computer must have a name that other computers can use to find it. This is the *machine address*. Machine addresses are maintained by special computers on the Internet called Domain Name Servers. The example address indicates that the computer is in the Fullerton School District (fsd), in a kindergarten through 12th grade school (k12), in California (ca), in the United States (us). This is an example of an address based on country name. Other Internet addresses are defined by organization type:

com commercial organizations (companies, etc.)
edu educational organizations (universities)
gov governmental organizations (cities, states, etc.)
mil military (army, navy, etc.)
org other organizations
net network resources

File to Retrieve

This is the actual file that your computer retrieves from the remote computer. If it is a page on the World Wide Web, your web browser will display the page and its associated graphics. If it is a program you are retrieving from an ftp server, your computer will download the file to your computer and save it.

NEW BEGINNING

Continued from 1

point of *Every Child a Reader.* The full report of the Task Force clarifies and elaborates on the recommendations.

Although all of the Task Force recommendations are important for educators and parents of gifted and talented pupils, several of the recommendations, however, have additional implications for gifted and talented education.

Clearly, the Task Force is recommending a balance between skill development and the literature-based approach. The report recognizes the importance of students learning phonics, grammar, and spelling, as well as the appreciation of good literature, and the ability to express oneself orally and in writing.

> "...every student might leave the third grade no longer learning to read, but reading to learn."

Recommendation #2 talks about "ensuring every child's optimal development," which implies 1) a recognition of differences in the rate of development of reading ability in students; and 2) encouragement for educators to assist each child to develop to his or her potential.

The emphasis on letting research guide the design of reading programs means that not only should we be examining what works and what doesn't, but also that we should be examining program effectiveness for different populations of pupils.

When a new approach is tried, careful records need to be kept in order to evaluate the impact. Some of the issues to be addressed include:

- Does it result in improved achievement for students as a whole?
- Does it result in improved achievement for special populations of students, such as students at risk of reading failure, English language learners, gifted and talented pupils, and special education pupils?
- Are the successes of one subgroup masking declines in reading achievement in another sub-group?

Only by thoroughly analyzing and evaluating current reading programs to determine effectiveness, and by modifying instructional strategies and curriculum appropriately, can we ensure that every child becomes a lifelong reader.

HOW WILL ACHIEVEMENT BE ASSESSED?

Statewide achievement testing has been temporarily placed on "hold," pending changes in the law. Governor Pete Wilson recently signed Assembly Bill 265 (Alpert-Coronado), which puts into law a comprehensive accountability system for California Public Schools. The new assessment system includes a number of components, only those relating to English-Language Arts are described below:

Rigorous Academic Standards

- Establishes rigorous content and performance standards in all major subject areas and for all grade levels. The state standards will be developed by the 21-member Commission for the Establishment of Academic Content and Performance Standards no later than July 1, 1997.

Local Assessment Program

- Places a priority on assessing student achievement on basic academic skills and the ability to use those skills.
- Provides a $5 per student incentive to districts that assess all students in grades two through 10 with commercial tests or other assessment from a state-approved list.

READING TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Every school and district must organize and implement a comprehensive and balanced reading program that is research-based and combines skills development with literature and language-rich activities.**
2. **Schools and districts must provide every teacher with a repertoire of diagnostic tools to continuously monitor and modify instruction to ensure every child's optimal development, and to identify students who need help in reading.**
3. **Schools must have an effective, rigorous proven intervention program as part of their comprehensive literacy plan for instruction with emphasis on early intervention for children by mid-first grade.**
4. **California must promptly establish clear standards in reading at each grade level and develop and implement a state-level assessment system that identifies to what extent students and schools are meeting these standards.**
5. **The state educational agencies and teacher training institutions must redesign teaching credential programs and require ongoing staff development in reading for all classroom teachers.**
6. **A high quality, preschool experience should be available to all children and must be provided to every low-income child.**
7. **Districts must supply a large number of high quality, appropriate, print, and electronic instructional materials.**
8. **Every school and district must mobilize all its resources to make reading a priority in the elementary grades.**
9. **The entire community must mobilize all its resources to make reading a priority in the elementary grades. The entire community must work together to ensure that every child can read.**
10. **The California Legislature, the Governor, the California Department of Education, and the California State Board of Education must recognize that reading is the highest priority in California schools and resources must be allocated to provide the necessary support to teach reading in every public school.**

Statewide Assessment

- Creates statewide assessment, to be developed by a private contractor selected by the State Board of Education in reading, writing, and mathematics at grades 4, 8, and 10 and in history, social science and science at grades 5, 8, and 10. The statewide exams will be based on the content and performance standards developed by the Standards Commission. A statewide Pupil Assessment Review Panel will review content to ensure that parent and student rights are protected.

Public Involvement

- Ensure public involvement at every step of the development of the new state assessment system through public participation on the Content and Performance Standards Commission, a statewide Pupil Assessment Review Panel, and other means.
- Assures access to the test items for all public officials, including legislators, and local school board members.
- Respects the wishes of any parents not wanting to have their youngsters tested.

Golden State Examination

- Authorizes the continuation of the Golden State Examination program, and the end-of-course testing program available for middle and high schools in written comprehension and other subjects.

It is imperative that advocates for gifted and talented education are actively involved as content and performance standards are developed, and tests are selected to measure reading achievement. Strong advocacy ensures that standards are set high enough to challenge every student, and that tests are selected which measure the achievement of students performing significantly above grade level. ■

Copies of Every Child a Reader *may be ordered from the Bureau of Publications, Sales Unit, California Department of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95812-0271; FAX (916) 323-0823, or call (916) 445-1260. Cost is $4.50 per copy, $40 for 10 copies, and $250 for 100 copies, plus sales tax.*

DIANE LEVIN is a consultant in English Language Arts, California State Department of Education.

CATHERINE BARKETT is the coordinator, Gifted and Talented Education, California State Deparment of Education.

34th Annual CAG Conference, Los Angeles, California

GATE CONNECTIONS

COMPUTERS • CURRICULUM • COMMUNITY

They'll come from all across California, these parents and teachers. From urban centers and village towns, from sprawling school districts and home-teaching sites. And maybe the only thing they have in common is the desire to do a better job of teaching and parenting California's gifted children.

The event is CAG's 34th annual conference at the Los Angeles Hilton & Towers, March 1–3, 1996. Nearly 2,000 parents and teachers will choose from more than 150 presentations and workshops during the three-day conference.

On Sunday, a special half-day conference for parents begins at 8 A.M. with a keynote presentation on television and gifted children. After brunch and a visit to the Exhibit Pavilion, parents may choose to attend any of the more than 30 presentations offered in the full conference program.

CAG's Student Seminar for youth in grades 7 through 12 gets under way Sunday at 8 A.M. Students choose from two workshops: 1) an interactive exploration to help them recognize their own intellectual and emotional intensities; or 2) a workshop to assess their own learning style while they gain insights into their teachers' styles. The seminar concludes at noon with extended activities until 1:45 P.M.

A separate Pre-Conference is available to full-conference attendees or as a separate single-day offering. Pre-Con presenters are reearch/authors from the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (Storrs, CT). This is a rare opportunity to meet the individuals who daily contribute new understandings and directions in gifted education.

If you have not received a registration brochure, call the CAG office at 415-965-0653 and leave your name and address.

TOMORROW'S PUBLIC LIBRARIES

BY AL MILO

It is difficult to imagine that the 21st century is only a little over four years away. To project what the public library of the future will look like, one must first reflect over the tremendous changes that have already taken place during the past five years. There are three major factors that have contributed to these changes: demographic changes, funding, and technology.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

Demographic changes have become a way of life, not only in the state of California, but throughout the United States. This is a concern for libraries as well as for educators. The biggest impact on public libraries has been in the area of cultural diversity. During the 1990s, this challenge was further complicated as communities moved from being bicultural to multicultural. Public libraries have the challenge of delivering services to all members of the community.

FUNDING

As with education, funding has become a major factor in the survival of public libraries as well. During the past decade, funding for public libraries from the state and federal level have continued to decline. Major entitlement programs funding public libraries (literacy, interlibrary loan, training, and demonstration projects) continue to be targets for cuts in the federal budget. On the other hand, most public libraries receive about 90% of their operating funds from local governments. It is the decline of local funding that is threatening the survival of public libraries more than state and federal soft monies.

Decline in local funding has changed the way many public libraries operate. The need for new revenues has seen an increase in fundraising, ballot measures, an increase in fees and fines, and charges for new services. More and more public libraries are creating foundations to raise money.

Libraries are being asked to charge for any new library services that are not defined as "basic library service," viz. new electronic resources. The pressure to raise local revenue on public libraries is often putting them in conflict with their mission to be accessible to everyone.

TECHNOLOGY

This brings us to the third trend being faced by public libraries: changing technology. Not only have libraries had to try to serve a more culturally diverse population with less funding, they must also deal with the impact of technology such as: CD-ROMs, LANs, Internet, and OPACs. Many librarians are excited by the new technology. They want to organize the Internet. To them, libraries are in the information business. For years information took on the format of the printed book. Now, information is being digitized and is being made available electronically. A small rural public library can now have access to the Library of Congress and its wealth of information.

Technology is having an impact on the kinds of resources that public libraries can offer. Libraries pressed for space can offer CD-ROM versions of encyclopedias and telephone directories. Instead of having to search through volumes of *Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature* for magazine citations, one can now search online databases, locate a citation faster, and, in many cases, print out a magazine article in its full text! The Library of Congress is leading the charge to digitize printed books. Libraries can now enhance their collections with copies of books not in their collections or that are out-of-print. There are electronic dictionaries, thesauri, quotation books, almanacs, and other desk handbooks that can be accessed via a terminal and a keyboard. Even computer manuals are giving way to disk formats rather than printed ones. Many university and public library collections can be accessed via a modem.

THE FUTURE

If public libraries market their resources to a culturally diverse population and set out the "welcome mat" to new immigrant groups, and, if public libraries make sure that they are key players in the transformation from printed information to digitized resources, then local leaders will continue to view them as worthwhile institutions that merit their support. After all, public libraries have always been the advocates of inclusivity and accessibility. The mission has not changed, just how we deliver our services. Public libraries must also divorce themselves from being perceived as warehouses for printed books. Dissemination of information has always been their purpose. The fact that information has gone from the printed word to electronic format really does not change that. The public libraries of the future will be places where students of many cultures and of all ages come together to use the resources provided by communities committed to excellence in learning.

AL MILO is the head librarian at Fullerton Public Library in Fullerton, CA.

LOOKING FORWARD: SCHOOLS AND RESEARCH

BY DIANE OESTREICH

In preparing the collection in the high school library where I work for conversion to an automated catalog, I did a double-take when I came to the book *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* by Edward Bellamy. I was intrigued by what the author, writing in 1888, thought our world would be like in that remarkable, milestone year which is fast approaching—2000 A.D. I'm afraid he would be disappointed; the world he envisioned was a utopian society where "private enterprise has been replaced by a benign state capitalism (*Encyclopedia of World Biography*, p. 474)."

Our world is one in which printed knowledge doubles every eight years; scientific and technological knowledge doubles every 5 1/2 years; a thousand new titles are published daily; the Library of Congress plans to have five million digital documents available by the year 2000; and the storage capacity of CD-ROMs and hard drives is measured in gigabytes. Despite this explosion of knowledge, one is left wondering who will be left to care about retrieving what is being stored.

Such a world gives pause to any librarian, but especially to a school librarian, whose mission is one of instruction, whose goal is to "ensure that students and staff are effective users of ideas and information." (American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communications and Technology, 1988, p.1) The amount of information is growing exponentially. No matter if students are reading from a computer screen or turning the pages of a book, they still must read and comprehend the information contained in the resource.

What will the school library of the future be like? Will the books have to talk to the students and entertain them with colorful images and sound? Will those strengths which come with literacy—"the capacities of sustained attention, reflection, and postponed gratification" (*America*, 1993, p. 4)—be lost? Will an increasing number of students live "almost exclusively on impulse, at the mercy of the television soundbite, or the machinations of demagogic populist heroes" (*America*, 1993, p.4)? Only time will provide the answers to these unsettling questions, but efforts at the state level are being focused on the critical skill of reading.

The recently released report by the California Reading Task Force, *Every Child a Reader*, focuses on the learning to read by Grade 3 and then reading to learn thereafter. According to the introduction of this document, "The Task Force members were unanimous in their conviction that reading is the most important academic skill and the foundation for all academic learning (California State Department of Education, 1995)." Reading provides access to the exciting, information-rich world of learning. This world includes extensive online databases, full motion video and sound available from remote locations at high speeds, increased links between computer networks on school campuses and at remote locations linked by wide area networks, wireless networks, or cable modem technologies.

School librarians of today have the challenging job of preparing our students to be effective users of ideas and information in a world we cannot really imagine. We know that students must have access to books beyond the textbooks in their classrooms. (By the time a textbook passes muster with all the varied interest groups who must have a say in its content, it generally is a rather bland, non-risk-taking publication.) The school library must provide diverse materials to carry students beyond the textbook, to encourage critical thinking and evaluation of sources, and to teach students to find information for themselves and make informed decisions based on that information. Andrew Carnegie believed that this concept of an informed citizenry was so essential to a democratic society that he provided seed money for the establishment of public libraries throughout the United States at the turn of the century.

The best efforts of school librarians must be directed toward teaching students solid information seeking strategies, strategies which can be applied to whatever tools they have for solving the information problems they will encounter in that intriguing world beyond 2000. Our survival as a culture depends on the outcomes of our efforts.

REFERENCES

American Association of School Librarians and the Association for Educational Communcations and Technology. (1988). *Information power*. Chicago, IL, and Washington D.C.: Author.

California State Department of Education. (1995, September). *Every child a reader*. Sacramento, CA: Author.

Regan, R. (1973). Bellamy. *Encyclopedia of world biography*, (Vol. 1 p. 474). Palatine IL: J. Heraty.

The broken dream of illiteracy, (October 2, 1993). *America*, 169 (9), p. 4.

DIANE OESTREICH is the vice president, organizational, of the California School Library Association and the librarian at Fullerton High School in Fullerton, CA.

CURRICULUM

DIVING INTO THE DISCIPLINES

Language Liberates Learners

BY SANDRA N. KAPLAN, ILLUSTRATIONS BY VICTORIA STEINITZ

Depth is the dimension of differentiation which helps students begin to ponder. Knowing the language, both of the argumentation and of the discipline, prepares students to discuss and problem solve with elaboration and substance.

The language of argumentation defines the vocabulary necessary to engage in critical thinking and intellectual debate. Words and phrases such as "proof, disagree, another point of view, all evidence indicates that" transcend a particular discipline and allow students to engage in intellectual discussion.

The language of the discipline enables students to delve deeper into a subject area, to understand more, and to problem solve more effectively. For example, vocabulary basic to any discussion and understanding of any social studies curriculum would include society, community, group behavior, internalization, institutionalization, norms, cause and effect, event, and interdependence and independence.

In addition, there are words and phrases specific to a particular part of a discipline. For example, in order to discuss and understand the structure of a story, a language arts class would need vocabulary words such as plot, setting, characterization, motivation, dialogue, exposition, symbolism, and style.

Finally, there is that language that professionals of a given field use.Only a landlubber would refer to the *front* or the *back* of a boat; a sailor would call them the *bow* and the *stern*. In discussing human evolution, an anthropologist would need to refer to protein synthesis, biochemical evidence, DNA replication, tactile communication, linked genes, crossing over, and primate locomotion.

Learning the language of the discipline provides gifted students with the means by which they can uncover new learning for independent study. Developing knowledge of a subject commensurate to an expert also is dependent upon the student's ability to learn the language of the discipline.

The degree of learning of the language is the degree to which the student accepts responsibility for the learning of the discipline.

The pages that follow are intended to be used as the basis for a *Learning the Language of the Disciplines* booklet. This booklet is to be a collector or a way for students to record the language (words and phrases) used by disciplinarians. The students are to assume the role of the disciplinarian or to "Think like a _____ "in order to collect, record, and define the language of the discipline. The booklet can be maintained by an individual student or by small groups of students who collaborate on the collection of words and phrases in the disciplines.

Language of the Scientist

Word or Phrase	Example from My Studies
replicate	We've done many of the same experiments over and over again to prove that the findings didn't happen just by chance.
validate	

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

Languages of the Disciplines Notebook

Language of the Anthropologist

Word or Phrase	Example from My Studies

Language of the Economist

Word or Phrase	Example from My Studies

Language of the Scientist

Word or Phrase	Example from My Studies

Language of the Sociologist

Word or Phrase	Example from My Studies

Language of the Artist

Word or Phrase	Example from My Studies

CURRICULUM

BY ANGEL BARRETT

UNIVERSAL THEME PROVIDES POWERFUL FOCUS FOR GIFTED STUDENTS

During the 1992-93 school year, I taught fourth and fifth grade students at Euclid Gifted/High Ability Magnet in Los Angeles. These students were beginning to transition and mainstream from a full bilingual (Spanish) program. The following is a summary of some strategies used for the thematic unit of Power.

1. **Introduction of a theme.** Sometimes you have to teach the theme, especially when you are introducing the theme and when introducing a new generalization. (Examples include: definition poster, brainstorming signs, creating a power book, and generalizations such as: *There are many types of power.*)

2. **Themes provide the focus for the curriculum.** Themes are the glasses that students use as they proceed with their studies. To be successful, students must understand the theme and how to apply their understanding.

3. **Use visual aids.** A visual aid such as a grapevine allows students to focus on the theme, review past generalizations, and add new ones. It provides a constant review and an instant reminder of the focus.

4. Teaching a generalization may be inductive or deductive. In deductive reasoning, the generalization is given and students find examples to support it. (*Power may be used, misused, or abused.*) In inductive reasoning, examples are given, and students determine the big idea that unifies the concept. (*Power may be natural or man-made.*)

5. **Set up centers.** Early in the unit establish some centers which can be modified to provide continuity. Examples:
   - **Powerful Symbols** (traffic signs, editorial symbols, algebraic symbols, hieroglyphics, Cherokee Alphabet, Braille);
   - **Powerful Words** (new vocabulary, key words, historical speeches);
   - **Art Is Powerful** (colors, art prints, crafts characteristic of the social studies unit, influential artists);
   - **Powerful People and Events** (key people and events in the curriculum and current news events);
   - **Power in the News** (choose a current event and have students identify the types of power represented and the consequences of the interaction, predict the outcome, brainstorm alternatives);
   - **It's a Powerful Year** (personal and classroom photos).

6. **Relate the theme to students' lives.** In the study of personal power, students brainstormed definitions and examples of personal power.

Some of the personal powers identified were work habits, confidence, common sense, personality, perseverance, creativity, intelligence, and organization.

I used the information to construct a large ladder at one corner of the room. At the top of the ladder, I placed each student's photograph on a red, white, or blue star. Already shining stars, students were learning to identify and set goals to improve their personal powers and shine even brighter.

Visual aids such as this grapevine help students focus on the theme by providing a constant review and an istant reminder of the focus.

Students brainstormed the positive and negative manifestations of each personal power that we identified. (Confidence enables someone to take chances. Too little confidence and the person is too afraid to try something new. Too much confidence and a person may become overconfident and make stupid mistakes. The person may also be conceited.)

Each student chose which power was a strength and which was an area to be developed. After explaining the rationale for choosing each one, the student set one to three goals for personal growth.

7. **Tie it all together.** Use the theme to enhance the curriculum and tie the disciplines together.

- **Language arts** - Using the generalization *Power is the ability to influence people or events*, each student identified someone who had the power to influence his or her life. Each student drew a portrait of the person and wrote an explanation of how that person was influential. Then we created a classroom gallery of powerful people in our lives. Finally, students made thank-you notes which they mailed to that person.

Powerful communication is clear communication. This statement was written on a rolling font to introduce the new idea. Students used post-its to guess what the banner said. After the class decoded the banner, I used the area to open a new continuing center, **Powerful Thoughts**, where we shared commentaries, both from famous persons and personal.

We expanded **Powerful Words** and applied the knowledge to identify powerful words and symbols in advertising. After evaluating various print ads, students invented a product and designed their own advertising campaigns.

Because the students often researched subjects and develop classroom presentations, students brainstormed ways to improve their presentations. They then developed a self-evaluation form and grading rubric for the class.

- **Mathematics** - Obviously, mathematical symbols made a great addition to the **Powerful Symbols** area. Students also researched how mathematical symbols for different cultures, and created a center with math problems in other systems such as Mayan and Roman. Other areas studied included the order of operations and exponents.

- **Social studies** - Power provided the content focus for the curriculum. (California history for the fourth graders, and U. S. History for the fifth graders.)
Students identified types of powers, who used them, how they used them, and the result. Students identified people and events who had the power to influence and/or change history. Under the generalization *Power can provide conflict or resolution*, students analyzed the collision of powers, analyzed whether powers can be independent or powers must be dependent (i. e., the change in one power will have a domino effect on other powers), and evaluated major historical decisions. ■

TRANSITION TIPS

BY ANGEL BARRETT

A basic tool needed for students to successfully study subjects in depth is to give them the language that they need. For students who are acquiring English as a second language, not only do they need the language of argumentation and the language of the subject matter, but they also need appropriate English skills.

Listed below are some of the methods I used to help transition and mainstream students acquire language proficiency.

DRAW!

Any of Fred Gwynne's books provide a humorous look at common idiomatic expressions, homonyms, and other seemingly mismatched words (fishing tackle, naval oranges, shoe trees). The books also make an excellent springboard for students to draw their own impressions.

WRITE!.

Pattern Poems provide a creative writing alternative while expanding grammar and vocabulary. For example, the "diamond" teaches:

noun
two adjectives
three verbs
two nouns + two nouns
three verbs
two adjectives
antonym

fall
chilly, windy, brisk
falling, blowing, flying
leaves, autumn, flowers, birds
blooming growing, budding
warm, green
spring

school
busy, hard
working, studying, learning
pencils, paper, ball, jumprope
running, jumpring, playing
happy, fun
recess

Cinquain emphasizes:
noun
two adjectives
three verbs
descriptive phrase
synonym

puppy
cute, funny
running, jumping, biting
my best friend
Lady

monsters
scary, mean
fighting, grabbing, chasing
eating little children
giants

LAUGH ABOUT IT.

Most comedy either depends on slapstick or puns. To understand many jokes in English, students must understand the subtleties of the language.

Why did the man throw the clock out the window?
He wanted to see time fly.
(idiomatic expression)

What happened when the glassblower inhaled his work?
It gave him a stomach pane.
(homonyms: pane and pain)

What did the ocean say to the shore?
Nothing, it just waved.

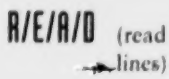
LISTEN!

A plane crashes on the border between the U. S. and Canada. On which side of the border would you bury the survivors?
(You don't bury survivors.)

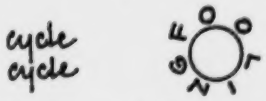
A rooster lays an egg while sitting on the roof of a barn. On which side of the barn does the egg fall?
(A rooster doesn't lay eggs.)

DIAGRAM!

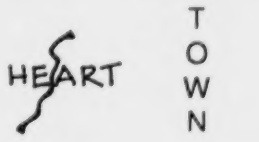
(sandbox)



(read betwen the lines)



(bicycle) (fooling around)



(heartbroken) (downtown)

DRAMATIZE

These Tom Swifties were written by Judie Snyder's class at Multnomah Highly Gifted several years ago.

"Our Tom Swifties Contest was the culminating activity that highlighted several different areas of language: word play (puns), mechanics (punctuation), grammar (adverbs), and synonyms."

"My pants fell off!" Tom shrieked draftily.

"Do you like make-up?" Tom questioned blushingly.

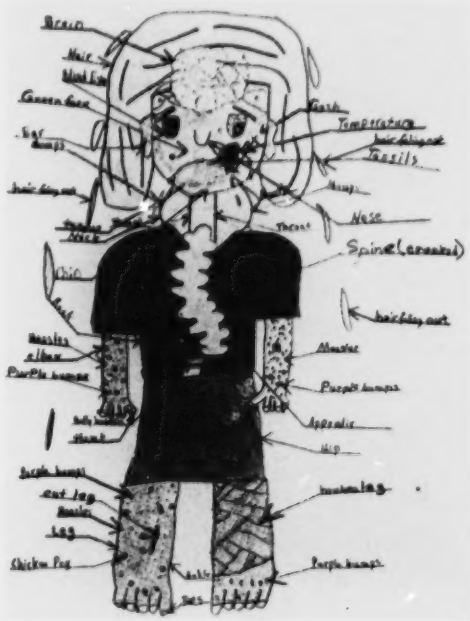
"I want a teddy bear," Tom pleaded stuffily.

I hate reruns!" Tom exclaimed repeatedly.

"May I have some candy?" Tom whispered sweetly.

READ IT.

Students love Shel Silverstein's poems. They also teach vocabulary. For example, in Silverstein talks about common maladies such as measles, mumps, and hangnails. ■



Sixth-grade students at Portola Middle School in Tarzana, CA, illustrate the maladies in Shel Silverstein's poem *Sick*. Among the language skills inherent in this project are vocabulary development, reading for detail, and dictionary skills.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you are *not* already a CAG member, please use the application below to become a continuing supporter of gifted education. Because CAG is active in lobbying efforts to promote appropriate education for gifted and talented students, dues payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

NAME: _____ (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Middle Initial)

PREFERRED ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ COUNTY: _____

PHONE Home ( ) _____ Work ( ) _____ AFFILIATION: _____ (School district of employment or attendance)

MEMBERSHIP/SERVICE CATEGORY
(for mailing addresses outside the U.S., add $10)

- ☐ Individual ($50)
- ☐ Family ($60)
- ☐ Patron ($100)
- ☐ Sponsor ($300)
- ☐ Life ($500)
- ☐ Benefactor ($1000)
- ☐ Limited Income ($20, attach letter)
- ☐ Communicator Subscription only ($25)

ROLE

- ☐ Administrator/Coordinator
- ☐ Board of Education Member
- ☐ Consultant
- ☐ Counselor/Psychologist
- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other

SPECIAL SKILLS/INTERESTS:

- ☐ Art
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Computers
- ☐ Advocacy/Legislation
- ☐ Other

PAYMENT ENCLOSED

- ☐ Personal Check #
- ☐ District Check
- ☐ Purchase Order #

CHARGE: ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card No. _____

Exp. Date _____

Mail with check or charge information to California Association for the Gifted
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040; Phone: 415/965-0653, Fax: 415/965-0654

California Association for the Gifted
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19 ■ Mountain View, CA 94040
Phone: 415-965-0653 ■ FAX: 415-965-0654

Non-profit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Canoga Park, CA
Permit #330

ERIC Clearinghouse
Janet Drill
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589

Time Value
Dated Material

COMMUNICATOR

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

VOLUME 27, NO 2, SPRING 1996

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

TECHNOLOGY

Don't Let Your Kids Have All the Fun
Discover eight easy steps to become a computer literate parent (not as impossible as it may seem!).

The Internet for Teachers
This book review reveals a handy and readable resource, especially for educators but also for all who are seeking ways to effectively use the computer in education.

The Software Explosion
With useful tips to be used as a guide, the explosion is neutralized into an invaluable force for gifted education.

Invention: What Makes Things Tick
The computer and its development is one of today's most important inventions. Inventors, young and old, are a special breed as pointed out in the Young People's Pullout.

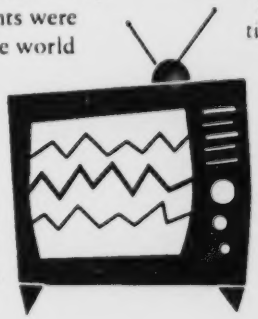
"Student As Instructor" Project
Instructional television is used to involve students in this open-ended projects approach to differentiated curriculum.

Virtual Field Trip on the Cybertrail
A teacher leads the pack by using technology to bring the Iditarod Sled Dog Race into 150 classrooms throughout the country.

EXPLODING MYTHS ABOUT TELEVISION AND CHILDREN

BY MILTON CHEN

Parents and teachers of gifted children face special challenges in educating their children in a media-saturated world. Gifted children, with the support of their parents and teachers, are often "early adopters" of educational technology. I remember asking a bright three-year-old if he knew how to spell his name. "Sure," he responded. "D-A-V-I-D, space, L-E-E." His parents were guiding his entry into the world of computers at an age when most preschoolers are just learning to recite the alphabet.



At the same time, gifted children are often quick to pick up undesirable language and behaviors from media, such as TV's violence or commercialism. A mother working for a Silicon Valley company told me of her two-year-old Sarah's early learning from TV. Her energetic daughter never sat still long enough to watch entire programs, but loved commercials. She danced to their music and sang their jingles. One night, an hour after Sarah's bedtime, her mother gave her a stern warning, "Sarah, it's bedtime!" Sarah stopped dancing in front of a TV ad. "Mom," she replied, "it's not bedtime! It's Miller time!"

Understanding the positive and negative contributions that TV, the Internet, video and computer games, and other media can make to our children's learning is becoming more, rather than less, difficult, especially given conflicting claims from educators, researchers, and advertisers. TV, the oldest of these electronic media and still the major media consumer of children's lives, has been the subject of a curious mythology. These myths would have us believe that TV is single-handedly turning kids into couch potatoes, frying their brains, shortening their attention spans, and lowering their academic abilities. These myths can be traced to the simplistic, yet persistent, view that TV, as a medium, has effects of its own that transcend any specific content. We can raise our own "media IQ" by 15 points simply by keeping in mind that content, rather than

See TELEVISION AND CHILDREN, 25

CONTENTS

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

1 **Exploding Myths About Television and Children**
Milton Chen

10 **The Software Explosion**
Hillary S. Hertzog

12 **Technology Copyright Laws**
Marge Hoctor

13 **...And the Internet Shall Set You Free?**
Andy Rogers

19 **The Internet: Check Your Sources**
Sara Armstrong

27 **Developing Your Child's Critical Television-Viewing Skills**
Eileen Hatrick-Sadeh

28 **College Explorations on the World Wide Web**
Dorothy Crutcher

29 **Virtual Field Trip on the Cybertrail**
Karen Krupnick

3 **Calendar**

3 **Letters**

4 **From the President**

4 **News Notes**

5 **From the Editor**

6 **On the Home Front** Don't Let Your Kids Have All the Fun, Marilyn Morrison

7 **Parent Opinion**
Parent/School Partnership, Laura and Arturo Selva
Computers: The Home-Schooling Connection, Roberta Ponce

8 **Book Review** *The Internet for Teachers*, review by Geri Williams

15 **Young People's Pullout**, Linda Brug

21 **Curriculum** "Student As Instructor" Project, Victor Lamkay

30 **Curriculum** Technology Tools to Enhance Learning, Jean Sais

PUBLISHED BY THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

Executive Director, Carol Brown Spencer
415.965.0653 Fax 415.965.0654

The CAG Communicator is published four times during the year: Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer. Opinions expressed by individual authors do not necessarily represent official positions of the Association. Subscriptions are available to non-members at an annual cost of $25.00.

OFFICERS 1994–1996

Executive Committee

President: Martha Flournoy
Vice President: Margaret Gosfield
Secretary: Marge Hoctor
Treasurer: Judith Roseberry
State Parent Council Chair: Vera Eby
Past President: Sandra Kaplan

Regional Representatives

Bay Area	Joyce Kutaka Kennedy
	Patty Bort
Capitol	Deanna Quinn
	Sharon Freitas
Joshua Tree	Margaret Jones
	Emilie Naher
Mission	Vicki Steintz
	Amalia Rodriguez
Mt. Shasta	Barbara Fox Roumasset
	Lyra Josefsson
Orange	Iris Yamaoka
	Karen Grinfeld
Pacific	Linda Calvin
	Judy Smith
Palomar	Dave Hermanson
	Pat Paluso
Redwood	Carol Butzbach
	Myra Kaye
San Joaquin	Donna Denham
	Lisa Waters
Santa Lucia	Geri Williams
	Margaret Rodrigues

COMMUNICATOR EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: Vicki Bortolussi
Associate Editors
Curriculum: Angel Barrett
Children's Topics: Linda Brug
Parents: Marilyn Morrison
Special Projects: Lisa Heimlich
Technology: Judy Lieb
Production: Madzeva
Special Assistance: Heather Schweit

SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL

To submit articles for publication, send hardcopy and a 3.5-inch disk (Mac or PC) saved as a text (ASCII) file. All submissions will be given careful consideration. Photos and camera-ready artwork are particularly desirable. Send all material with your name, address, phone number, fax number, and Internet address to Vicki Bortolussi, ***Communicator*** Editor, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Rd., Moorpark, CA. 93021 Tel: 805-378-1405, vckib@aol.com

REPRINTING OF MATERIALS

Articles appearing in the ***Communicator*** may be reprinted as desired unless marked by © or reprinted from another source. Please credit the ***Communicator*** and send a copy of your publication containing the reprint to the Editor.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LETTERS

New Look

Congratulations on the "new" *Communicator*. The format of the publication is easy to follow and the content is well organized and "meaty." Through my own publication, *Gifted Education Review*, I summarize all the articles in all the major journals and magazines in gifted education. It is a pleasure for me to read and summarize the articles in the *Communicator* because they are rich in information, well laid out, and offer research-based information without being too technical. I like the theme orientation and have recommended the fall 1995 issue on compacting to many people as one of the best sources I have found on the subject.

Carol Ferng
Peak Educational Resources, Inc.
Publisher of *Gifted Education Review*
PO Box 2278
Evergreen CO 80437-2278
1-800-643-2194

Website and Conference Kudos

I am so glad to see CAG's website! I hope to see additions to the site in the near future. Perhaps an area to directly interact with our area representatives would be helpful. Also, updates on news and goings-on within the regions.

I loved the CAG conference at LAX!! It was my first one, but it was great!! The CAG people did an outstanding job. I took my 14-year-old daughter and she enjoyed the experience as well. Of course we loved the vendor exhibits too! So many neat ideas...so little money!!!

We attended the Challenger field trip to Cal State Dominguez Hills. We really enjoyed it and wish we could take our students there. I hope one is built in the Bay area soon, as it would be closer. The trip was well run and nicely organized. Thanks again.

I hope to see more at this website soon, it looks like a great start. Thank you for your efforts, you are appreciated.

Doris Pacheco
Madera County

HOW TO REACH CAG

MAIL
Write to Carol Brown Spencer, Executive Director, CAG, 426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040

PHONE OR FAX
To reach the CAG Office by telephone, call 415-965-0653; to contact by FAX, dial 415-965-0654.

AMERICA ONLINE
Direct inquiries to the CAG Office via America Online. Our e-mail address is cbs2000@aol.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Write to Dr. Vicki Bortolussi, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Road, Moorpark, CA 93021. Tel: 805-378-1405, vckib@aol.com

WEB SITE
http://members.aol.com/cagifted/cag.html

CALENDAR

APRIL 12–14, 1996
CAG Board Meeting, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Sacramento.

MAY 31–June 2, 1996
CAG Board Retreat for new and returning officers and directors, Beverly Heritage Hotel, Milpitas (Silicon Valley). Please note this change in date and place. This retreat was originally scheduled for June 14–16, 1996 at Asilomar Conference Center.

SEPTEMBER, 1996
CAG launches the 1996 Certificate of Completion program in September. CAG members should watch their summer mail for a brochure giving full details.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 28–March 2, 1997

35th Annual CAG Conference

Sacramento

FALL, 1996
CAG Teacher Institutes. Watch future issues of the *Communicator* and "Intercom" for the fall schedule of CAG teacher institutes. Sites will include Santa Barbara, Fresno, San Diego, Concord, San Jose, and Orange County.

CAG's 1996 Teacher Institutes will emphasize theory into practice and include demonstrations (with students) of lessons differentiating the core curriculum. Another focus will be on the relationship between the California Department of Education standards and differentiating the core curriculum. Each institute will include a novice, advanced, and expert strand.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARTHA FLOURNOY

Technology: You either love it or loathe it. For those of us who passed through the hallowed halls of education prior to the "information" age and who have not had the necessity or interest in keeping abreast, it is a big commitment to take the plunge. Things have changed so quickly. As a child growing up near UCLA, the neighborhood was all a-buzz when the university acquired one of the few state-of-the-art computers. An entire room was filled with equipment. It was most impressive. Now, I understand that the functions of those machines, and a multitude of additional ones, can be accomplished on one's lap.

Technology and computers have changed the way we view things and the way we do business. We have become more efficient and clear in transmitting information. During the past year, the CAG Board has been committed to making use of e-mail as a means of communication. A number of years ago, a similar attempt was made and it was unsuccessful. This year, we have over half the board and all but one region using e-mail. My sense is that once there is a necessity or reason to take the plunge, it becomes a given. As a former technophobe who now has acquired limited but essential skills, I could not do what is demanded of me without those skills.

Technology is a given for our children. Without computer and technological skills, our students will be severely handicapped in years to come. As paints and brushes are tools for an artist, so are computers tools for children today. Technology is not a substitute for education, but rather an extension. Accessing information that would have been beyond the grasp of most students, unless they were geographically fortunate in living near a major university, gallery, or center, is now so simple. Classrooms can communicate with other classrooms and share in research or common projects world wide. Students can visit museums and institutions that would have never been possible a few years ago. Technology is a tool to be used to achieve our goals, but should not be viewed as *the* goal. It is a very powerful and far-reaching tool that has limitless possibilities. No longer is there room for loving or loathing technology. We must make the best use of it. ■

NEWS NOTES

Technology Transforms 1996 CAG Conference

GATE Connections: Computers, Curriculum, Community was the theme of the 1996 CAG conference. Roger Wagner, the keynote speaker, demonstrated the classroom use of multimedia technology and connections to the community. Television and the gifted child, video cameras in the classroom, the Internet, and various curriculum-based software programs were conference topics.

In the CAG Pioneer New Media Technology Room, teachers and their students presented individual multimedia projects based on HyperStudio presentation software and incorporating various laser disk programs. Topics covered by the students included: a comparison of the Civil War and Vietnam, architecture in the ancient world, Roman life, ecology, California Indians, animals, innovative Americans, and space.

Dr. Robert Abelman, Cleveland State University, shared research on the "good news" about television and the gifted child with parents during the parent conference and with educators during other conference sessions. Hall Davidson, of PBS station KOCE, talked about the future of technology and demonstrated a sophisticated, easy way for teachers, parents, and students to get the most from their camcorders.

The Internet was the topic of many sessions. Al Rogers from the Global Schoolhouse Foundation discussed the California Web Project in which students would be major contributors to the knowledge base on the World Wide Web. Several teachers shared Internet resources available for social science, science, and general research.

The 1996 CAG conference provided a record number of parents and educators of the gifted with resources to benefit the education of their children in this communications age. ■

FROM THE EDITOR **VICKI BORTOLUSSI**

Spring—Technology Is in Bloom

"To everything there is a season..."

Thus the spring season theme for the *Communicator* is technology—a companion piece to CAG's annual conference—Gate Connections: Computers, Curriculum, Community.

Technology is not only a theme but it is a phenomenon that permeates every day of our present lives and portends to dramatically shape our future lives.

Curse or blessing, technology cannot be ignored, especially for the gifted of our society. Technology is helping to differentiate curriculum, enabling a depth and complexity one could only heretofore imagine. Technology must be understood and embraced. It is not the answer but rather a means to discover problems and solutions.

As you read this issue of the *Communicator,* you will find a variety of perspectives as we continue to examine the role of technology in the lives of gifted individuals.

Milton Chen looks at myths and realities surrounding the ever-present technology of television. Marilyn Morrison encourages parents to harness the fun of the computer and become computer literate. Parents provide opinions on their choices in regard to technology as they decide to send their children to school or to school them in the home in the articles, "Parent/School Parntership" and "Computers: the Home-Schooling Connection."

The vast Internet world is visited in a review of the textbook, *Internet for Teachers* and the article, "And the Internet Shall Set you Free?" "The Internet: Check Your Sources" emphasizes an Internet downside which can be a powerful learning opportunity. The explosive growth of choices of another technology component, software, can be managed through a guide on how to make selections for the gifted student. Copyright implications and curriculum projects are also provided in articles in this *Communicator.*

Technology, and its link to inventors and inventions, is presented in our "Young People's Pullout."

Technology—the mother of invention. Technology—the ever-present and the future promise. Technology—not a replacement for in-person contact, for live performance, for the artist's sketch, for the warmth of the human touch of a handshake or a hug. Technology—only as good as the human beings who harness it and use it to grow a better world. ■

CAG COMES HOME

The California Association for the Gifted now has its own home page on the World Wide Web. Thanks to Sharon Freitas, CAG board member from Sacramento, and her husband and family, you can get connected through the internet address:

http://members.aol.com/cagifted/cag.htm

The current home page includes highlights of the CAG conference in words and pictures. In the future, the *Communicator* may be included in some form.

To communicate with Sharon and the CAG home page, use the address cagifted@aol.com. Let us know what you think of the site, how we can improve it, what you'd like to see it include, and any other suggestions, ideas, and concerns. ■

ON THE HOME FRONT

BY MARILYN MORRISON

DON'T LET YOUR KIDS HAVE ALL THE FUN

Become a Computer Literate Parent!

Have you ever noticed that children hardly ever seem intimidated by computers, but grown-ups often panic when confronted by a mouse—in this case, the electronic kind? I think it's because children have figured out that it's almost impossible to break a computer just by pushing a button on the keyboard to see what will happen. This sense of adventure and experimentation allows kids to develop their computer skills faster than their parents and teachers, but we can learn from their example. Here are some steps you can take to improve your own computer literacy, and maybe even catch up with your kids:

Don't be afraid to make a mistake on the computer. Strike a key and see what happens. Try playing a game or writing a letter. The computer program will usually give you a message if you're trying to do something that can't be done. (Avoid striking a key repeatedly; if it doesn't work the first time, try another approach.)

Spend time on the computer in the evening after the kids have gone to bed, so they can't laugh at your ineptitude.

Try subscribing to a computer magazine aimed at families. I have found *Family PC* incredibly informative, yet easy to understand. The publication includes reviews and ratings of hardware and software to help you choose from the plethora of products available, as well as ideas for craft projects and homework help.

Stay up-to-date on what's new in the marketplace by getting on the mailing lists of software manufacturers (such as Microsoft) and retail stores (such as Egghead Software). When you buy a new program, you will automatically be added to the manufacturer's list if you take the time to fill out the registration card. Some catalogs, such as *Critical Thinking Press & Software*, feature programs especially geared to gifted children. You don't have to buy any of these products, but it's helpful to know what's out there.

Take an introductory class on how to use the Internet. Many public libraries offer free sessions, or try your local community college or university extension program. Or, ask a friend who's a step or two ahead of you in the computer game to teach you the basics in exchange for a cup of coffee or an extra turn in the carpool.

Read a book that takes a simple approach to a program that's causing you trouble. *The Idiot's Guide...* and *...for Dummies* series are designed for beginners, and include lots of illustrations (an important element).

If you can afford it, sign up with an online service, such as America Online, CompuServe, or Prodigy, and try exploring a topic that interests your family. Send e-mail to someone—you won't believe how exciting it is to get mail back! Additionally, the thousands of sites on the World Wide Web offer recipes, product information, concert dates, travel tips, and lots more that you can easily access.

Once you're online, learn how to put your name on a mailing list—to receive postings on topics that interest you. One that I can recommend is CEDRES@unb.ca, a Canadian-based list that provides information about educational resources on the Internet; their recent recommendations included Web sites on volcanoes, math puzzles, Native Americans, and Boston's Computer Museum. Or, scroll through the recent messages posted in America Online's "Giftedness Forum" (Keyword: AOL Families). You can ask a question and watch for an answer; you may be surprised at how many other parents share your concerns and problems.

So don't be afraid—parents *can* be computer literate, and you can have fun getting there! ■

MARILYN MORRISON is the parent of two gifted children. She is the *Communicator* Associate Editor for Parent Topics.

PARENT/SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

A Step In the Right Direction

BY LAURA AND ARTURO SELVA

The debate over whether to pull children out of public school and place them in the haven of home or private school is a hot topic of conversation among many parents in California and across the nation. After considerable deliberation on the pros and cons of the education offered by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD), we chose to keep our five gifted children in city schools. Our decision was not based entirely on finances or parent availability, but rather on our feeling that when we pay for a service, we have the right to make certain demands of that service. To us, LAUSD's commitment to greater parent involvement supports this concept, and is based on the realization that schools can no longer exist in a vacuum. The idea of parents and teachers working in collaboration in the areas of accountability, assessment, curriculum, and budget is very attractive and promising. (One of the best ways parents can be sure their voices are heard is by serving on leadership councils with teachers and administrators.)

Public schools offer our children a rich repertoire of academic and social options. Many districts offer special programs in performing arts, computer technology, ecology, mathematics, science, law, and business, to mention a few. There are also programs for children with special needs such as alternative and continuation schools. Underlying the curriculum in all these programs is the belief that it is crucial for our children to learn to recognize and respect the strengths of all individuals in our multicultural society.

We are not completely pleased with all the facets of the curriculum being offered to our children. One area that seems weak is the exposure to technology—many classrooms simply do not have enough computers. To address this shortage in our children's classrooms, we have four computers at home, and we provide our children with access to information through America Online and computer magazines. Not all parents have the resources to provide computers at home, however, and we must continue to work in partnership with our schools to lobby for additional technology and computer funds.

Despite the shortcomings in technology, our school district's current curriculum is broad in scope, embracing the positive aspects of living in a richly diverse multicultural society. We feel that public schools offer us the most democratic arena in which to voice our opinions, through our active participation and ongoing input. A partnership between parents and schools, at the local, district, and state levels, offers a fertile forum for change. ■

LAURA AND ARTURO SELVA have five children. Laura is a language development teacher at Euclid Avenue Elementary School and Arturo teaches kindergarten at Bridge Street Elementary School, both in Los Angeles.

COMPUTERS:
The Home-Schooling Connection

BY ROBERTA PONCE

Nine years after the birth of our first son, and six years after the birth of our second, our family gave birth to our home-school experience. As a practice, home-schooling seems strange to some, but the concept makes perfect sense to us. The family is a child's first and most enduring social network; it's natural for children to look to their parents for encouragement and support. For our family, it seemed logical to extend our support into a cooperative learning experience. (I say "cooperative" because our home-school experience has been very interactive so far.)

In my mind's eye, I fast forward 15 years from now and I see my two sons reminiscing about their childhood. They talk about the kid next door, lazy summer days, and funny experiences they shared. They also remember the one thing that made them stand out among their friends, cousins, and neighbors: home-schooling. They remember how people kept asking them if they socialized enough. They recall the intense theoretical debates across the kitchen table between well-intentioned skeptics and Mom and Dad, as we marched forward into the unknown world of home-schooling.

In the present, though, I'm focusing on ways to incorporate technology into our home-school experience. One goal is integrating basic word processing programs with journal writing. Additionally, my husband shares his Microsoft Paintbrush program

with my young son—the same son who had previously been anti-art, anti-crayon, never a fingerpainter—who is loving the computer art that he creates.

The next challenge is trying to stay one step ahead of all the new programs and technology on the superhighway (just when I thought a modem and fax were high tech!). So, the estimated date for THE NEW COMPUTER PURCHASE!!! (drumroll and applause)—a Pentium 133, scanner, and laser printer—is February. The old, passé, used-to-be-top-of-the-line Intel 286 is soon to be relegated to the recently renovated home-school room (formerly the playroom). The boys are counting the days until Computer Purchase Day, dreaming of the freedom that climbing on board the Internet will bring.

The kids also think that the new computer means they will get to play more games. So far, we've kept game-playing on the computer to a bare minimum. It was not a commitment to a strict philosophy that led to this policy in our home—my husband and I just weren't game-players. Some parents turn their kids on to the computer via games. Others introduce the computer as a tool

first and a "game" later. Our kids' first experience with the computer was using it as a word processor. As they get older, we'll probably have to negotiate which game programs are okay. As you can guess, we're not fond of games that promote violence, flash, gore, or obnoxious noises. My kids are fascinated by these games (ones they've seen on that kid-next-door's computer), so I guess they're not total home-schooling freaks. Actually, the kid next door is the root of my argument for why I think socialization is overrated, but I guess that's the theme for a different article.

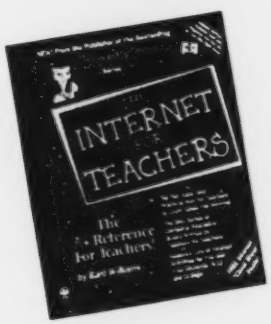
At this point, I like that my six-year-old writes imaginative stories on the computer. I like that my nine-year-old found a renewed interest in writing newspaper article summaries when his fingers met the keyboard. My boys enjoy printing out their own drawings and creating original crossword puzzles with clues and answers unique to their own whimsical interests. I like that my dad, who's 73 years old and an avid chess player, taught my nine-year-old to play the game on the computer. It makes me feel good that my sons understand that they are living in a technological age and are not intimidated by, but eager to explore, this developing world. ■

ROBERTA PONCE is attending law school and began home-schooling her two sons in December, 1995.

BOOK REVIEW **REVIEW BY GERI WILLIAMS**

The Internet for Teachers

The A+ Reference For Teachers!



The Internet for Teachers
Bard Williams
IDG Books
1995, 350 pp

The author, Bard Williams, is an educator, writer, and technology consultant whose infectious writing style reflects his belief that "nothing is more exciting than seeing enthusiastic teachers use technology to guide motivated learners toward new ideas and new horizons." A former middle school teacher, he is currently the Coordinator of Computer Technology and support for the Gwinnett County School District. He dedicates his book to the people who believe that "learning is fun and teaching is an honor."

In the introduction, the author states the book's simple premise:

So, here it is in plain English. All the techno-babble has been stripped away, and here are the basics about how to get started, how to do some cool things after you get online, and how you can harness the power of the Internet in your classroom.

The Internet for Teachers is divided into five parts, designed to be read either in sequence or on their own.

Part I: Log On: The Internet in Education

This section tells what the Internet is, its history, and gives reasons why you and your school should participate.

Part II: Getting Wired
You'll learn what hardware and software you need to get started using the Internet. Also included is a brief look at Internet responsibility, a growing concern worldwide.

Part III: Internet Resource Roundup
Williams refers to this section as the backbone of the book. Resources are presented in small, palatable pieces. Learn how to send and receive electronic mail, explore online databases, receive files, and talk live to people around the world.

Part IV: The Net Meets the Classroom
Here's a glimpse into how to write lesson plans for instruction using the Internet, hints on our changing roles as instructors (now *knowledge navigators)*, and some mind-saving tips on what to do "when things go nuts."

Part V: The Part of Tens: The Internet Educator
Fun! Here are lots of sites for students (and you) to visit.

Part VI: Appendixes
This part contains help on identifying Internet terms and gives practical hints on problem solving.

For those of us who are visual learners, several icons are used throughout the book to signal terms or topics that might be of interest to teachers. (See the sidebar for examples.)

Each part and chapter of the book begins with clear highlights of the information found there. In addition, Chapter 20 contains grade-specific lesson plans with suggestions for extensions and challenges for those students already advanced in the use of the Internet.

Part V begins with Williams' admitting that he is an avowed information junkie. Each of the sites in his lists are "teacher-tested and guaranteed (sort of) to dazzle and excite even the most glassy-eyed video game player." Included are: Ideas for E-Mail Exchanges,Ten Mailing Lists Not to Miss, Ten Groups of News-groups Any Educator Could Love, Ten Gopher Sites, Ten Great FTP Sites, Ten Great Educational Telnet Targets, and Ten Educational and Reference Web Sites Not to Miss.

Williams claims his book is to be picked up when one needs a quick reference. As a contrast, I read his book while on holiday in Spain, without both the convenience (or distraction) of a computer in sight! This situation provided me with a unique perspective. I approached the book as a text, highlighting and placing Post-its on pages, just as the author suggests using "electronic bookmarks" for future reference. In this review, you will find many quotes taken directly from the text to illustrate the book's readability and sense of fun. Frankly, I could hardly wait to try many of the dozens of intriguing suggestions. I am hooked! ■

GERI WILLIAMS is the GATE resource teacher in San Jose Unified School District.

ICONS—MORE THAN JUST CUTE PICTURES

Following are some of the icons from *The Internet for Teachers* and an example, in the author's own words, of the type of information highlighted.

Activities for you and your students.
Show your students how to telnet to LaunchPad and download a Supreme Court decision. If you've never seen the text of a decision, it'll be a technical writing interpretation challenge that you and your students will never forget.

Items the author feels are "must use" in the classroom.
Sound Machine: Freeware that enables you to play and record sounds that you download from the Internet. It has lots of cool buttons that you can use to change the speed, play backwards, loop sounds, switch formats, and so on, while the sounds are playing.

Vocabulary explained.
Netscape is the granddaddy of Mosaic, a freeware program that enables users to browse the World Wide Web. It's feature-rich, provides access to WWW, Gopher sources, and—here's the best news—it's FREE for educators!

Programs that are on the disk contained in the book.
Programs included on the disk are Stuffit Expander 3.5.2, Turbo Gopher 2.0, NCSA Telnet 2.6.2d4.2, Fetch 2.1.2, and Eudora.

Things to watch for or that can make your life easier.
To understand what people mean when they talk about FTP, you have to get out your parts-of-speech manual. You'll use FTP, the noun, when you refer to the actual...

Interesting and current information about the Internet.
The Internet began with only four computers that were hooked together in a research and defense network. By March of 1995, more than 4,000,000 computers were hooked to the Net.

Practice on the Internet—hands-on learning.
The following steps walk you through a sample session that uses Fetch to retrieve a file.

A danger sign. Hold the mouse!
Attached files don't always translate properly between commercial online services and accounts with universities or Internet service providers, or vice versa.

—Geri Williams

The Software Explosion

A guide to selecting instructional material for gifted students

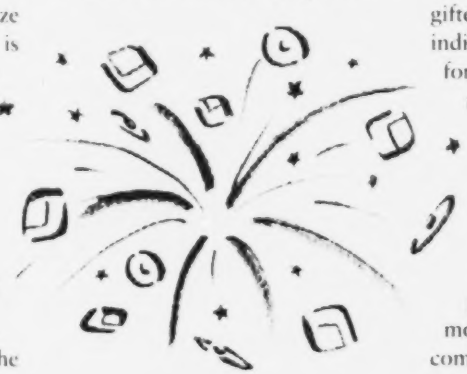
BY HILLARY S. HERTZOG

Have you looked lately at a recent software catalog from one of the bigger distributors? The software market is expanding rapidly, with CD-ROM products leading the way. We all have budgets to adhere to—some are larger than others, some are school-based, and some are home-based. We all hate to make poor choices. In this current flood of new products, how can we select software that will serve our gifted students well?

First, it is important to analyze the software market for what is being produced, and what hardware requirements are necessary. Your purchasing power may be determined partially by your hardware configuration. The term "software" refers to any product that needs a computer interface to operate. This means that multimedia products, which include the use of CD-ROM and/or laser disc with operating software, are included in the realm of available products.

The current trend is toward the development of CD-ROM products, as opposed to software on floppy disks. With its advanced storage capability for sound and graphics, CD-ROM provides a medium which can contain much more reference material than traditional floppy disks. However, CD-ROM software often requires more sophisticated hardware, with 60MB to 100MB hard drives, and 8MB to 16MB of RAM now considered to be a minimum requirement for efficient operation. CD-ROM software has resulted in the development of programs with extensive information retrieval capacity, creating an information explosion available to us in the classroom and in the home.

Educators and parents continually ponder how to choose software for children. Some choose the best sellers; others choose the award winners. However, in selecting software, the particular needs of the learner should dictate software selection. In the case of gifted students, providing a differentiated curriculum has been encouraged as a means of stimulating such students to develop increasingly complex levels of thinking and production. We can use the strategies imbedded in the concept of a differentiated curriculum to help identify criteria for selected software for gifted learners. Differentiation of instruction is achieved through the implementation of strategies which promote acceleration of learning, in-depth study of a topic, changing the complexity of subject matter, and the student's ability to approach study in novel ways which are individualized (California Department of Education, 1994). Consideration of each of these strategies can help us specify software selection guidelines for gifted learners.



ACCELERATION

Increasing the pace of subject matter study through individualization is one way of meeting the gifted learner's needs. However, individualization can be difficult for the classroom teacher to manage and monitor. Computer-based software can provide individualization of subject matter study through the use of tutorials.

Currently, with advanced programming capability and more sophisticated hardware becoming the norm, teachers and parents should look for quality programs which include extensive tutorials, self-pacing features such as the ability for the learner to revisit or skip parts of a tutorial according to perceived need, a record-keeping function so the student can track progress through a program, and a bookmark function so the student can revisit the sequence of instruction easily after taking a break. Programs such as *Math Blaster Mystery: The Great Brain Robbery* (Davidson), which helps the student learn pre-algebra concepts in a self-paced format, and *A.D.A.M. Essentials* (Broderbund), which introduces

and provides detailed information about human anatomy, are examples of self-paced software which allow students to accelerate their learning.

DEPTH

A student who shows unusual interest, skill, or knowledge in a subject should have the opportunity to study the topic in depth. The student's knowledge will surpass others', including the teacher's. Thus, software is an excellent way of providing expertise and an enriched knowledge base to students who want to study a subject beyond their current understanding. The flood of CD-ROM products especially meet the teacher's needs for providing depth to curriculum study because of the increased available memory, graphics, and sound capabilities. Publishers are creating CD-ROMs which study many subjects in depth. Educators and parents should look for software that gives menus for individual choice, allows the learner to quit a "path" of learning and return to the main menu, and includes graphics and sound to illustrate concepts and content. Some outstanding examples include *Mammals: A Multimedia Encyclopedia* (National Geographic), *In The Company of Whales* (Discovery Channel), *The Industrial Revolution* (Clearvue), and *Journey To The Planets* (Multicom).

COMPLEXITY

A teacher can extend a student's knowledge of a topic by challenging the student to study issues, problems, and themes related to the subject. Teachers can encourage a focus on complexity by having students play out the roles of different participants in the problem-solving process. Computer simulations offer the teacher an excellent opportunity to provide students with this type of thinking. Most teachers are familiar with older simulations such as *Oregon Trail* (Broderbund). Fortunately, CD-ROM technology has given software designers the freedom to make simulations more lifelike because of better graphic interfaces, and offer increased decision making on the part of the learner due to expanded memory capability. Along with informational CDs, these simulations comprise the fastest growing part of the software market.

Look for simulations which ask students to experience thinking from the perspective of a "professional," such as *SimTown* (Maxis), in which the learner thinks like an architect and city planner to build and manage a small town and influence the lives of the people who live there; and *Maya Quest* (MECC), in which students visit the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico to decipher hieroglyphics, reconstruct a monument, and search for clues to explain the collapse of the Mayan civilization.

NOVELTY

Providing opportunities for students to interpret information in original ways, look for new implications of content, and approach the study of disciplines in a personalized way are examples of creating novelty in the study of a subject. As the California Department of Education (1994) defined, "For students to create novelty, the making of personal meaning (invention or interpretation) is required." Open-ended simulations such as *Widget Workshop* (Maxis), which encourages learners to create widgets and design and enact testing situations, encourage invention, creativity, and interpretation. The use of presentation software such as *HyperStudio* (Apple) can provide students with the means to organize and interpret content or concepts in a way which encourages novelty. Use of presentation software can encourage divergent thinking, risk taking, collaboration, and multiple solutions, all of which are elements that foster novel thinking.

Selecting software by applying the same criteria used for designing instruction in the gifted classroom will more closely integrate technology with the learner's overall educational experience. ■

REFERENCE

California Department of Education and California Association for the Gifted. (1994). *Differentiating the Core Curriculum and Instruction to Provide Advanced Learning Opportunities*. Sacramento: California Department of Education.

HILLARY S. HERTZOG is a clinical professor of curriculum and teaching at the University of Southern California. She also consults with various school districts on selecting computer equipment for their students.

MOON

Don't go moon,

It's very soon.

You have pretty light

You are very bright.

Bye, bye moon

Please come in the afternoon.

Shireen Alihaji, age 7
Grade 3, New Horizon School
Pasadena
Shireen Rijab, teacher

TECHNOLOGY ©OPYRIGHT LAWS

Your district probably has a policy—do you know the guidelines?

BY MARGE HOCTOR

Most school districts in the nation have a Board policy regarding infringement of copyright laws. While copyright guidelines are reasonably clear in the area of computer software, the rules regarding the use of television, video, and multimedia materials are not as clear and may be open to interpretation. Many educators say they are confused as to exactly what can legally be used in the classroom.

The following is a compilation from a variety of sources and should by no means be considered legal advice. If there is any question regarding the use of material, request permission from the copyright holder and keep the written response on file for as long as you are using the material.

"The copyright guidelines for media and technology are varied and in many cases unclear..."

COMPUTER SOFTWARE

Most producers and/or distributors of computer software programs include copyright and licensing information in the package. While guidelines may vary among software companies, the majority of software programs allow use with certain general restrictions.

With the purchase of a computer program, the owner is allowed, often encouraged, to make one backup copy for archival purposes. The original program and the copy may not be used at the same time. If the copy in use is destroyed, one more copy may be made from the archival disc. Many software companies offer licensing options to schools and school districts such as school site licenses, district site licenses, and lab packs of software programs.

OFF-AIR RECORDING OF TELEVISION PROGRAMS

The Fair Use Guidelines of the United States copyright law were developed in 1979 to allow educators to preview material for use in the classroom. While not a part of the law, they have been widely accepted as the standard. These guidelines allow off-air recording of televised material with the following restrictions.

Commercial/PBS Television

Educators may make a single copy of a program aired on commercial or PBS television stations. The program must be used in the classroom within 10 working days of the air date. It may not be used in the classroom after 10 days, however, the program may be retained by the educator as a resource for 45 calendar days from the air date, at which time it must be erased.

Subscription Television

Programs aired by subscription television services such as HBO, Showtime, or satellite services may not be copied for classroom use under any circumstances without express permission by the producer(s). Be sure to get permission in writing and keep it on file.

Cable Television

The Fair Use guidelines do not specifically address taping of material from cable TV channels. Consequently, there are varied interpretations of the restrictions making Use guidelines uncertain at best. Before cable material is used, it is important for educators to check with the producer/distributor or cable channel; many offer educators limited rights for the use of materials ranging from 10 days to one year.

RENTAL AND/OR PURCHASE OF VIDEO TAPES FOR CLASSROOM USE

Educators may rent or purchase a video tape for classroom use if it is used for face-to-face instruction as a part of a classroom lesson. The material may not be used for reward or recreation; such use requires permission from the producer/distributor and in most cases will involve an additional fee.

MULTIMEDIA—LASER DISC, CD-ROM, TELECOMMUNICATIONS

With the rapid change in the delivery and access of information, guidelines have not been developed quickly enough to provide consistent rules for the use of multimedia.

Interpretation of guidelines regarding the use or transfer to computer or video of materials obtained from laser disc, CD-ROM and/or the Internet seems to vary according to the source of information. It is possible to attend two sessions at a technology conference and come away with two diverse opinions as to what is legal and what is not. The best and safest way to ensure operat-

ing within legal copyright limits is to contact the copyright holders in question and obtain guidelines in writing from them.

The copyright guidelines for media and technology are varied and in many cases unclear; however, it is the responsibility of the educator to become aware of the restrictions on material used in the classroom. The illegal use of material that is protected by copyright denies the creators their fair share of the profits. In addition, it is important that educators, as role models, keep ethical standards high. What message does it send to a student when a teacher lectures on the value of ethics and honesty, and then sends a child to the computer to work on a pirated disk? ■

REFERENCES

California State Department of Education. (1991). *Suggested copyright policy and guidelines for California's school districts.* Sacramento, CA.

Carter, J., Bender, I., Demac, D., Sinofsky, E. & Stansbury, R. (1995). The copyright question. *Cable in the Classroom, 5-12.*

RESOURCES

Copyright law: What every school, college and public library should know [Video]. Available from The Association for Information Media and Equipment, P.O. Box 141, Skokie, Illinois 60076.

Don't copy that floppy [Video]. Washington, DC: Software Publishers Association, (202) 452-1600.

K-12 guide to legal software use. Washington, DC: Software Publishers Association, (202) 452-1600.

MARGE HOCTOR is the coordinator of K-12 programs and services in the Garden Grove Unified School District.

...AND THE INTERNET SHALL SET YOU FREE?

Road Signs and Insights for the Internet Traveler

BY ANDY ROGERS

From fun to education, communication to saver of the world, many theories abound as to what the Internet is and what it is not.

UNDER THE HOOD

The Internet is a network of wires linking computers all over the world. It was originally developed by the Department of Defense to aid military communication. Ironically, when the U. S. military tried to destroy Iraqi communication systems during the Gulf War, the Iraqis used the Internet to maintain contact.

Colleges and universities have known that the Internet could be used as a communication tool for a long time. In addition to electronic mail, the Internet has become a research tool. Because of the nature of the Internet, posted information is available from anywhere in the world on any computer connected to the network.

This development took place using a computer operating system called UNIX. While UNIX provided a powerful environment, the system demanded that users possess knowledge of many difficult UNIX commands. In recent years, the Internet has become more accessible, especially since the development of the graphical (able to display pictures) World Wide Web.

ONRAMP TO THE SUPERHIGHWAY: INTERNET ACCESS

Connecting to the Internet may be accomplished in many ways. Most people use an ordinary telephone line with computer software that allows one to dial into an Internet service provider. Service providers such as Prodigy, America Online, and CompuServe all give varying degrees of access. Many services charge for access by the hour which may result in high telephone bills for the user.

Access can also be provided over a local area network (LAN). A computer within an organization is connected by a wire to a central server, a large computer which is connected to the Internet. While the explanation of LAN access is greatly simplified here, the point is that this connection is faster, easier, and cheaper for the user. It is faster because the wire is larger than a regular phone line. It is easier and cheaper because the organization or institution pays for support and access.

FLASHING RED: INTERNET IN THE SCHOOLS

The Internet can change the way students learn. Unfortunately, usage by schools and teachers is often dependent upon availability. In the best of all possible worlds, each classroom would have four or five computers connected to a LAN in the school. Teachers could then integrate the capabilities of the Internet into the curriculum. Sadly, most classrooms

don't even have a telephone, fewer still have an empty telephone line, and fewer yet have a computer network.

The goal is for technology to be integrated into the curriculum—for the teacher to change methodology to make use of the new technological applications. Easy to say, but how does a teacher begin? First, the teacher should not try to do it alone. Curriculum reform is a collective effort. Each school site should develop a comprehensive technology plan, placing the Internet in context. It must be remembered that there are many other computer applications to consider as part of the overall plan to bring computers into the school.

Second, when money becomes available, the staff often spends the money before deciding how the purchased technology will be integrated into the overall curricular reform. The type of computer does not matter; how the hardware and the software will be used is the issue. Even if money is not available at the moment, a technological plan should be developed in preparation. Knowing how the staff wants to use technology enables them to determine what computers, networks, and applications are needed to meet the objectives outlined in the plan.

Third, the comprehensive plan should be examined along with the incremental steps to achieve long-term goals each year. Technology is expensive, so planning is critical. Instead of waiting for enough money to meet all long-term goals, the plan can identify intermittent steps each year. For example, a small network might be built in a library or in classrooms of those teachers who already have developed their classroom plans.

The Information Technology Division of the Los Angeles Unified School District developed LAUSDnet, an Internet node, as a tool for schools, to give administrators and teachers another way to deliver the curriculum to students. Other districts and states throughout the country use other service providers. No matter which provider is used, the Internet is only one of many tools for implementing the use of technology in schools.

GREEN LIGHT: INTERNET FOR TEACHERS

Few schools possess the ideal conditions for using the Internet in the classroom. The lucky teachers will have access to a telephone line in the classroom. Others can connect over a line in the faculty lounge or library. Many will use the Internet from home.

Given the barriers, why would anyone *want* to use the Internet? There are several primary reasons.

- Electronic Mail (e-mail), which enables worldwide communication. In addition, the process of writing and sending e-mail can be used in many ways to teach skills that may be more difficult with other applications.
- Accessing information from all over the world. With the use of search engines, Internet users can request information on a vast variety of subjects.
- The World Wide Web (WWW). A color monitor displays the colors and graphics of the WWW. There are many search engines that can be used to find information. With very little skill, teachers and students can even design their own "home page" for display. People from all over the world can then see their work.

These examples only scratch the surface of possible uses for the Internet. The local bookstore and computer store are good places to browse the many books available that can further explain how to use this application.

YELLOW LIGHTS

A few cautions should be observed.

- There is a great deal at stake for vendors and utility companies. Faculties may be bombarded by representatives who claim to have solutions to the school's technology needs. Be wary. Be inquisitive. Determine how the proposed solutions fit into the stakeholders' overall plan for the site.
- To take complete advantage of the opportunities offered by implementing technology into the curriculum, change will be needed. Computers are more than another means to "drill and kill." They are more than word processing. Integrating them into a curriculum can change traditional methods of research and communication.

WELCOME TO LOS ANGELES

More than 4,000 people use the LAUSDnet. Students, teachers, and administrators are exchanging information online. As LAUSDnet develops, discussions about curriculum will take place. Lesson plans and instructional modules developed by LAUSD staff will reside on the Internet and be available to all. The way we communicate and the way we teach will change. It is impossible to predict what the effects of the telecommunication revolution will be, but it's certain that all schools will be profoundly affected by this brave new world.

Welcome to the future. ■

ANDY ROGERS is a coordinator in the Information Technology Division of the Los Angeles Unified School District. He can be reached at arogers@lausd.k.12.ca.us.

BY LINDA BRUG

INVENTION What Makes Things Tick?

When you think of an "inventor," you might imagine a wild-haired professor working in a laboratory with many bubbling test tubes. To many people, an inventor is a combination of a scientist and a dreamer. However, anyone can be an inventor!

All inventions start as someone's idea—and nearly everyone has plenty of ideas about ways things could be improved. Some ideas are for things that do what no one has ever done before; others make old inventions better. Even though anyone can have a good idea, a good idea alone does not make a person an inventor.

To be an inventor, you must learn to let your mind search, to look at everyday things in a new and different way. An invention doesn't have to be something radically new—even the simplest ideas sometimes become successful inventions. The Hula Hoop was based on hoops children had been playing with for years.

Inventors come in all ages. Being a young inventor has advantages. Young inventors are willing to try things that others think might be impossible. Chester Greenwood invented the earmuff when he was 15 years old, and two young inventors experimented with solutions that helped Kodak to create color film. Did you know that Ben Franklin began inventing at an early age? When he was 13 years old, he invented hand paddles that enabled him to swim faster. He abandoned the invention since it tired his wrists. Before their famous flight at Kitty Hawk, the Wright brothers tried to make a helicopter large enough to carry passengers, but their effort failed.

Make Note of This!

One Sunday in church, Art Fry, a 3M employee became frustrated when the papers he used to keep his place in the hymnal kept falling out. Spence Silver, another 3M employee, had invented something sticky but it wasn't sticky enough for his use. He sent out a company memo asking if someone could use his sticky material. Art Fry said, yes, and the now familiar Post-it was born.

It may surprise you to learn of the many successful young inventors. Here are just a few of them and their inventions.

- Vanessa Hess, a 7th grader, invented a colored wax for cars.
- Hannah Cannon, an 11-year-old California student, invented a card game named CARDZ.
- At the age of 10, Becky Schrodeder invented a luminescent backing sheet for writing in the dark.

What if you come up with an idea for a great invention? How do you protect your idea? How do you sell your product? There are several steps you can take.

The first, and most important, is to keep records of the development of your invention. Use a journal to keep track of your ideas and experiments. Be sure to record the time, date, and location in your notes. When your device works, demonstrate it to an adult and have him or her sign and date a description of what happened.

The next step is to decide whether to patent your invention. A patent is an agreement between you, the inventor, and the U.S. government. Pick up some gadget that's around your house. Chances are you'll find a set of numbers on it somewhere. Your stapler, for example, may show on the bottom "Patent 2033018." The numbers show that the inventor applied to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and that no one else had ever invented a stapler quite like

READ ON!

Bailey, Joseph. *Small Inventions That Make A Big Difference.*

Caney, Steven. *Invention Book.*

Bender, Lionel. *Invention.* Eyewitness Books

Jeffries, Michael. *Inventors and Inventions.*

Tucker, Tom. *Brainstorm! The Stories of Twenty American Kid Inventors.*

Turvey, Peter. *Inventions. Inventors and Ingenious Ideas.* Timelines

57 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

this one. A patent gives the inventor exclusive rights to make and sell that item for a specific period of time. A patent does not guarantee that your invention will sell. Here are some interesting patents given in 1992. Which one do you think will be profitable?

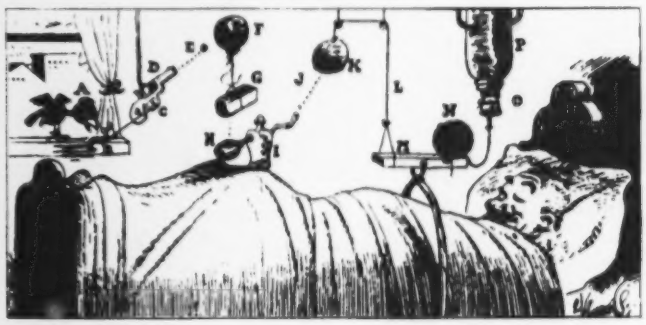
- A radio that displays written information about songs as they are being broadcast.
- "Aquashoes" that resemble cross-country skis and allow a person to walk on water.
- A beach towel that features a kind of sundial to promote even tanning and to help sunbathers keep track of the time spent in the sun.
- A square ball that bounces as predictably as a round one.

A patent is not available for every invention. A game, for example, cannot be patented, but parts of the game can be protected. Some inventors have decided that they can protect their invention better by not applying for a patent. That way an inventor can keep the details of the invention a secret. The formulas for Coca-Cola and Silly Putty have never been patented. The secrets are locked away in bank vaults and only selected company officials and trusted family members have access to the information.

If you have an idea for an invention, keep working on your design. Many inventors started inventing as young people but waited until they were adults to develop their inventions. Perhaps you can follow in the footsteps of Hannah Cannon or Ben Franklin.

Simple Alarm Clock

Rube Goldberg cartoon. Published in 1919.



The early bird (A) arrives and catches worm (B), pulling string (C) and shooting off pistol (D). Bullet (E) busts balloon (F), dropping brick (G) on bulb (H) of atomizer (I) and shooting perfume (J) on sponge (K)—As sponge gains in weight, it lowers itself and pulls string (L), raising end of board (M)—Cannon ball (N) drops on nose of sleeping gentleman—String tied to cannon ball releases cork (O) of vacuum bottle (P) and ice water falls on the sleeper's face to assist the cannon ball in its good work.

WHAT'S A "RUBE GOLDBERG"?

Have you ever heard of the cartoonist Rube Goldberg (1883-1970)? He said, "People can do things two ways—the easy way or the hard way." He was fascinated with the hard way. Goldberg created a character named Professor Lucifer Gorgonzola Butts, who was a crazy inventor of complicated contraptions designed to prove that the simplest tasks could be incredibly complicated.

Rube Goldberg's inventions have made him immortal; he is the only American to have his name become a dictionary word while he was still alive. He also won the Pulitzer Prize in 1948.

Each Goldberg invention included the interaction of wheels, levers, animals, and people. Even though he frequently used weapons, the weapons were used to continue the action, not to harm anything. His favorite subjects for inventions were the radio, automobile, airplane, and telephone.

Goldberg's other inventions include:

- Mosquito-bite scratcher
- Window closer
- Bathtub soap retriever
- Self-operating napkin
- Self-washing windows

B.C.
20,000 - bow and arrow
2000 - flush toilet
100 - paper (China)

A.D.
1286 - eyeglasses
1291 - mirror (Italy)
1450 - moveable type (printing)
1590 - microscope
1593 - thermometer
1608 - telescope
1657 - pendulum clock
1709 - piano
1752 - lightning rod
1801 - electric lamp
1804 - locomotive
1816 - match
1830 - lawn mower

INVENTION WARM-UPS

Interested in inventions and inventors? Try some of these activities.

BY JOANNE KAPLAN

1. List as many inventors as you can.
2. List as many products that are the result of inventions as you can. Fit them into different categories like a) small enough to fit into a shoebox, b) found in the kitchen, and c) clothing items.
3. List things invented before 1800.
4. Name 10 inventions of Leonardo da Vinci.
5. Explain the meaning of "Necessity is the mother of invention." Give examples.
6. Explain why there are so few women listed as inventors.
7. Pick an invention. Explain how it has changed our lives.
8. Illustrate in a cartoon how a need has led to the development of a specific invention.
9. Develop a timeline illustrating major inventions and identify their countries of origin.
10. Compare a variety of inventions which have the same purpose (jar openers, cork screws) and determine which is most effective.
11. Design an invention to improve your bicycle.
12. Given a specific invention, illustrate and explain a) the first form of the invention, b) the current form, and c) your idea of what the invention will look like 20 years from now.
13. Create a new design for a specific device while adapting it for a special purpose. Examples: stop light for handicapped people, toothbrush for busy people, multipurpose hat.
14. Think of as many new ideas as you can to add to the game of baseball to make it more interesting to play.
15. What new inventions would we need if people had a third hand?
16. What would you see if you were the first airplane to fly?
17. What would happen if all inventions had to be approved by a government inspector before they could be tried?
18. You have the power to blend two inventions. Which would you put together? What would you call your new invention?
19. If you could invent a device to solve a major world problem, what would you choose to work on?
20. How is a bandage like a Post-it note?
21. What would Christopher Sholes, the inventor of the typewriter, say to Steve Jobs, inventor of the Apple Computer?

Joanne Kaplan is an elementary GATE teacher in Ventura.

CREATE YOUR OWN GOLDBERG CARTOON

1. Think of an invention to perform a simple task (example: automatic device to tie shoelaces).
2. Break it down into necessary steps and label each A, B, C, etc.
3. Draw the action.
4. SEND YOUR CARTOON TO: Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Dr., Ventura, CA 93003.

The most creative Goldberg cartoons will be published in the *Communicator*. The first place cartoon will receive a copy of *The Internet for Kids*, which is being reviewed in this issue.

DID YOU KNOW...

Leonardo da Vinci invented, in a drawing, the concept of the helicopter over 400 years before one really flew.

The first sneakers were worn by the Mayans who covered their feet with melted rubber.

1849 - safety pin
1801 - electric lamp
1850 - refrigerator
1852 - elevator
1869 - vacuum cleaner
1877 - phonograph
1884 - pen; bicycle
1885 - car
1886 - Coca-Cola
1888 - camera
1891 - zipper
1893 - motion pictures
1903 - airplane
1906 - washing machine
1920 - Birdseye frozen foods
1926 - TV
1928 - computer
1929 - "Scotch" tape
1936 - helicopter
1953 - color TV
1972 - video game

STUDENT VIEWS

Two students reviewed the book Internet for Kids *by Deneen Frazier, SYBEX Inc., 1995, 314 pages, $22.99 Here's what they found...*

Internet for Kids is a complete program made for students K-12. It includes a book full of interesting things to experience on the Internet. The Internet allows you to talk with kids from all over the world about interesting subjects. Some other features include: online games, scientific surveys and experiments, and interesting facts on things you enjoy. You can even talk to writers, scientists, artists, and even get a pen pal on the Internet.

Unfortunately, there is a monthly rate of $19.95 for 40 hours.

I give *Internet for Kids* two thumbs up!

—Katie Mitchell, 8th grade
Balboa Middle School, Ventura
Marilyn Renger, teacher

I enjoyed reviewing the book *Internet for Kids*. I have a lot of experience with computers so I was interested in what this program had to offer. It includes a disc, and a complete book with description of services offered on the Internet. In order to use this program you need a personal computer of any kind, communications software, a modem, and a connection to your phone line.

The book is well organized and contains many helpful suggestions throughout the chapters. This service includes e-mail and the World Wide Web. You can even talk to the President! Many of the chapters help you to learn such as the section entitled, "Looking for Answers." There is also a whole chapter that describes ways to share your ideas, writing, music lyrics, and art.

Overall this book is easy to use but you must connect up with Netcom at $19.95 monthly. If you purchase this book, Netcom will waive the $25 registration fee.

I think this is a great book for students who are interested in exploring the Internet.

—Jonathan Snyder, 8th grade
DeAnza Middle School, Ventura
Linda Brug, teacher

"Your Turn!"

I recently invented a board game called "San Diego Vacation." When I started creating this board game I wanted a game where you could lose or gain money. I thought about the fun places I had been to. I decided to make my game about San Diego since I knew a lot of fun and expensive places there.

One problem that I had while making the game was that I put too many spaces at the beginning of the game and by the end I couldn't fit some spaces in that I had planned on.

Another problem I had was that I didn't have enough places to gain money. To solve this problem I put on some property where the owners could gain rent money. Also, I made some cards called "Risk Cards" where players could gain some money. The "Risk Cards" added more fun and excitement to the game because you didn't know if the card you drew would put you ahead or behind in spaces, or lose or gain money. To remind me of some attractions in San Diego, I used a city map. I hope the choices I have made are fun for the players.

TRISTAN GAGNON-BARTSCH is a 5th grader at Elmhurst Elementary. His teacher is Joanne Kaplan.

CALLING ALL STUDENTS!
Send your suggestions, stories, poems, art work, Goldberg cartoons, invention ideas, or other types of writings to:
Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Dr., Ventura, CA 93003.

The Internet: Check Your Sources

BY SARA ARMSTRONG

In the early days ('way back in the early to mid-'80s), even up until a year ago, exploring the Internet could be tedious and frustrating. The available software tried to make the Unix computer language accessible so that simple tasks, such as reading e-mail and replying to it, could be performed by those of us outside the field of computer science. Some software succeeded better than others. Some were less expensive than others. But, each had its own quirks or tricks that had to be mastered. Then, everything changed. About a year ago, special Web browser software—first Mosaic and then Netscape—became available. Seemingly overnight, the World Wide Web, with sites all over the world, became accessible. It suddenly became possible for teachers and students to enter what David Thornburg calls the Communication Age. Beautiful sites which present art and music can be found quickly and easily, allowing students and teachers to bring treasures into the classroom.

For example, any time of the night or day, you can visit the Web Museum and take a close look at Monet's work. The site can be found at http://www.emf.net/louvre/. At the Internet Underground Music Archive (http://www.iuma.com/), you'll find music clips from unknown artists who want to share their music with the world, and have found an exciting way in which to do so.

Stunning sites sharing information of any kind imaginable can be found. Whether you're interested in quilting (http://ttsw.com/MainQuiltingPage.html) or what's going on at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (http://www.jpl.nasa.gov), you'll find other people to learn from and share with on the Internet, as well as many places from which students can obtain up-to-the-minute information on a wide range of topics.

The White House is online for the first time in history (http://www.whitehouse.gov), and you can exercise your citizenship by taking a look at bills that are currently being argued in the legislature at Thomas (http://thomas.loc.gov), visit the Library of Congress (http://lcweb.loc.gov/homepage/lchp.html), check out information from the CIA (http://www.odci.gov/), or participate in a project that promotes world peace through I*EARN (the International Education and Resource Network, found at http://www.igc.apc.org/iearn).

No one knows exactly how many sites you can get to on the Internet—some say there are over 100,000 Web sites alone—but all agree the number gets bigger each day. You most likely will be able to find at least a few people somewhere in the world who share your particular passion, or can offer information to inform your favorite lesson. You can be in touch with people you might never have known about, and still may never meet. This opportunity to expand the walls of school and home to include the whole world is awesome to consider. The ramifications for teaching and learning will drive the evolution of schools and schooling well into the next century.

URBAN LEGENDS

Given the proliferation of Internet sites, and the information that is available, a few important questions surface quickly. For example, how do you know that what you're seeing online is reliable information? How can you find what you're looking for? Let's look at these two issues one at a time.

Did you ever hear the story about the woman who bathed her toy poodle, and then decided to dry him off in the microwave, with tragic results? No one has been able to prove that it really happened, and this tale has become what's called an urban legend—a story that has something to say about living in city environments in the 20th century.

The Internet has its own brand of urban legends which seem to

recur on a regular basis. For example, did you hear the one about the chocolate chip cookies? I first saw the message a few years ago, and again when it turned up last week. The story goes that a woman and her daughter (or a man and his son) were eating lunch at Nieman Marcus in New York. For dessert, they ate the most delicious chocolate chip cookies they'd ever tasted. The woman asked if the restaurant ever sold copies of their recipes, and the waitress assured her that they did. "How much?" asked the woman. "Two-fifty," replied the waitress. So the woman said she would like a copy, which she was given. When she received her lunch bill, the woman discovered she had been charged $250 for the recipe, not the $2.50 she was expecting. She tried everything she could think of to get the charge reversed, but with no luck. So, the story goes, she decided to take her revenge by telling her story to the world, and sharing the "exclusive" cookie recipe, which was part of the e-mail message that appeared on a number of listservs. The recipe is actually pretty good, but no one can trace its origin. Since this message turns up online with variations on a regular basis, most people have concluded that it's another urban legend, Internet style.

"Since it's so easy to put information out on the Internet, we need to take extra care that students realize their responsibility for checking sources."

So, how do you know what you and your students find online is reliable? Just as with offline sources, you'll offer guidelines and discuss possibilities with your students. For example, it's important to be aware of where the information originated. If your students have located documents from the Library of Congress (http://lcweb.loc.gov/homepage/lchp.html), you can probably assume the information they are citing is reliable.

Sometimes, students will get excited about a piece of information they think would be perfect for a paper or project which was forwarded to them by a friend or member of a listserv. By e-mailing the person who forwarded the source, or otherwise tracing its origins, students can begin to learn about identifying reliable information. Of course, any information obtained online should be treated with the same respect regarding copyright laws as books, journals, and other offline sources.

Since it's so easy to put information out on the Internet, we need to take extra care that students realize their responsibility for checking sources. Perhaps, because just about anything that comes to us via computer looks legitimate, we need to work with students to develop appropriate evaluation criteria.

If students come up with online sources that cannot be documented beyond a friend's assurance they are correct, you might discover a perfect opportunity to discuss assessment of source material with your class.

Students can work together to come up with more of their own thoughtful guidelines for evaluation of online resources, which they can then share with their colleagues around the world through the Internet.

SEARCH TECHNIQUES

The good news and bad news about the Internet is the same: no one controls it, organizes it, or can tell you exactly where to find specific information.

The "good news" part of this statement concerns ease of access, availability of a vast array of information, and possibilities for communication that couldn't easily exist before now. The "bad news" part has to do with being able to find what you need in a reasonable amount of time online.

There are several programs, called search engines, which are working to make the task easier. They differ a little bit in what they do and where they look. Yahoo (http://www.yahoo.com/) was developed by a couple of college students as a way for them to navigate the Internet (presumably for their own academic needs). When you and your students access this site, you'll find categories of information which you can use to help narrow your search. For example, you'll find art, education, law, news, and science, among other categories. You'll be able to narrow your search further by entering keywords, which the Yahoo software will look for in the titles and contents of Web pages.

Another search tool, which starts you off with keyword options, is Lycos (http://lycos.cs.cmu.edu). After you enter your keyword, Lycos searches the net for matches to your keyword or words, called "hits." As with Yahoo and most other search tools, you can see the matched sites 10 at a time, and you'll be given the name of the site, a few lines from the page, and the URL (uniform resource locator, or address, of the site). You have the option of going directly to the site, or looking at other possibilities. Through this exercise, you can help your students become aware of some of the differences between how computers work and how people think.

For example, I wanted to look up information about the Trojan Horse found in Homer and Virgil. When I entered "Trojan Horse" as keywords, I got lots of references to the computer virus of the same name. In other words, computers aren't as "smart" as human

brains. People have programmed computers to perform tasks, but it's human intelligence that made computers possible in the first place, and will improve on their performance in the future.

A rather new search engine, Open Text (http://www.opentext.com), offers even more possibilities and combinations of requests for sources. You may want to assign a specific topic or word for students to research, and let small groups of students use different search engines. When they bring back what they found, and share the methods they used, they can begin to assess the efficacy of different search engines for the task at hand. Again, what they conclude will be of interest to their peers around the world, and can be shared through the Internet.

GLOBAL VILLAGE

The Internet is an exciting place to visit often, take from, and contribute to. However, it's not without its barriers, challenges, and cautionary notes. In any case, it is having an impact on education, and can only increase in that regard.

Perhaps the story of another urban legend will make my point. A few months ago, a member of a listserv (a mailing list of people who share interests in the same topic) to which I belong posted a message of help which was forwarded from another reliable list. In it, we learned the story of a young man who was dying of cancer, had only a few months to live, and wanted to get his name into the *Guinness Book of World Records* as having received more get-well cards than anyone else in the world. His name and address were given, and I bought several cards and sent the first few off, planning to send the others over the next few weeks. The next time I logged on, I found messages from others, saying the story was a hoax and had been going around for years. Feeling rather foolish, I decided that if I were going to be taken in by a hoax, this was the best kind.

Then, two other bits of information came my way. The person who had forwarded the message to the listserv contacted her source and found the item was indeed true, but it was a seven-year-old story which should have been deleted from the original place years earlier. However, the good news was the young man had indeed made the world record and, even better, he was still alive—a cancer survivor.

Shortly after that, I saw a story in the newspaper about him, along with his picture. My point is this: without Internet access, I wouldn't have even heard the story, let alone been able to participate in some level. Although we can't always find what we want quickly, or may experience added expense or information overload, the Internet makes Marshall McLuhan's concept of a global village real and immediate. As we and our students explore the Internet's vast resources, put them to use, and contribute to them, our participation in the human endeavor of communication is powerfully enhanced.

Have fun exploring, and let me know what you think. ■

SOURCES

Armstrong, S. (1996). *A pocket tour of kidstuff on the Internet.* Alameda, CA: Sybex, Inc.

Thornburg, D. (1991). *Education, technology, and paradigms of change for the 21st century.* San Carlos, CA: Starsong Publications.

SARA ARMSTRONG, Ph.D. is an educational consultant, teacher educator, author, and storyteller. A member of the Board of Directors of Computer-Using Educators (CUE), she can be reached at saarmst@telis.org.

CURRICULUM

"Student As Instructor" Project

Using Instructional Television to Empower Students

BY VICTOR LAMKAY

The "Student As Instructor" project provides an appropriate vehicle for teachers to differentiate instruction within the classroom, and opens the door for students to incorporate media technology in projects that are "real." Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to align with school reform and create open-ended projects that students initiate and construct using Instructional Television (ITV) programs and curriculum-aligned video. Traditionally, teachers have planned lessons that incorporate ITV. Why not give that opportunity to students and support them in developing essential research, communication, and presentation skills?

The "Student As Instructor" project is described in five parts, with Part 5 being the expansion to new projects and technologies. Here is an overview of what the project looks like in the hands of the students.

PART 1 - PREVIEW

Selected students choose and preview the ITV program that they will later present to their audience.

PART 2 - DECIDE ON AN OUTCOME

Students link the program to

the curriculum and write an outcome. They consider the question, "What is the most important thing I want my students to learn as a result of presenting the lesson?" Examples of how outcomes could begin are:

The audience will gain an understanding of...
The audience will be able to...
The audience will appreciate...

PART 3 - DEVELOP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Students develop thoughtful discussion questions for their audience to think about as they view the program. They introduce the program with a purpose for viewing that is related to the outcome they chose.

We are going to view this show to see how...
I want you to watch for and think about...
Be ready to discuss why you think...
How was a problem solved?
Can you think of other solutions?
What new questions does the program raise that we might address?
What would a follow-up program look like?

PART 4 - ENGAGE AUDIENCE IN THOUGHTFUL DISCUSSION

Following the viewing, students engage their audience in a discussion based on the questions in Part 3. They note what the "hot issues" are and begin thinking about follow-up activities that will address them. Guiding the discussion, student instructors develop with their audience related activities that would naturally extend learning into other areas of the curriculum, and into a variety of media technologies.

PART 5 - EXTENDED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Students plan and organize activities and resources that extend learning. Part 5 functions to connect and integrate instruction by asking students to create meaningful real-life projects directly linked to their lesson outcome.

Here are some examples based on the ITV program:

- Prepare a survey. Tabulate and graph the results.
  Incorporate the use of computer spreadsheets and involve using the Internet to post the survey.
- Plan a promotional/advertising campaign.
  Design posters and fliers using computer graphics programs.
- Plan a creative video.
- Write letters to a guest speaker and plan a reception.

TRAINING STUDENT INSTRUCTORS

Just like the real teacher, student instructors can benefit from a period of training that includes:

- Learning about outcomes and their value in guiding instruction;
- Learning the art of questioning to promote creative thinking;
- Discovering the attributes of an effective presenter including enthusiasm, establishing a rapport with the audience, diction, and enunciation.

If students are to conceptualize, carry out, and present their projects effectively, they need to be guided through the individual aspects of the activity. In the beginning, the teacher can present the project to the entire class by dividing them into cooperative groups and having the groups work independently using the same ITV program. For example, for the first training lesson, the class can preview the same program and each group then comes up with its own outcome. The groups can take turns presenting and sharing the outcomes with the rest of the class. The rest of the class would offer the presenting group feedback and reflection on the presentation. The training continues in the same manner going through the remaining four parts of the project. As students become comfortable with the five parts of the project, they can begin to plan and present an entire project independently.

PROJECT APPLICATIONS

The "Student As Instructor" project may be used as a regular classroom activity, an opportunity for students to present lessons to students in other classrooms; or, at the highest level, a student exit project for students in grades 5, 8, and 10. The "Student As Instructor" project demonstrates authentic performance and enables the student to begin with an interest, develop a knowledge base, investigate in depth the content and relevance of an ITV program, and acquire effective communication skills to convey learning and motivate others.

The "Student As Instructor" project gives students the opportunity to become meaningfully involved with curriculum content. Why not offer your students the chance to think analytically and develop effective presentations using easily accessible ITV technology? Try it! ■

VICTOR LAMKAY is an instructional media adviser for KLCS-TV, Los Angeles Unified School District.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

STUDENT AS INSTRUCTOR

Project Sheet - page 1

Date: _____ **Subject:** _____

Name of teacher(s): _____ _____

Names of students in the cooperative group:

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

Name of Video Program: _____

PART 1

After viewing the program, write an outcome for your audience based on the program. For example:

- The audience will gain an understanding of...
- The audience will be able to...
- The most important thing that I want my students to learn is...

It is a pleasure to share with you this program titled _____

You will learn about...

Sit back, relax and enjoy the program.

Keeping Learning
Class KLCS Television
Centered on Students

© September 1995, Victor H. Lamkay

STUDENT AS INSTRUCTOR

Project Sheet - page 2

PART 2

Write up to three stimulating questions that your audience should think about as you introduce the program to them and they view it. For example, you may complete the following suggestions:

- We are going to view this show to see...
- I want you to watch for and think about...
- What new questions does the program raise?

PART 3

Lead a discussion with your audience based on your stimulating questions and notice the ideas for follow-up activities that begin to emerge.

PART 4

Develop a follow-up activity for your audience based on the discussion in Part 3. Keep a look-out for areas to further explore or an activity that will help clarify some of the issues in the program. Some sample activities are:

- Develop a dialog with a friend about the issue and summarize the discussion.
- Plan a creative video based on the program.
- Prepare a survey. Tabulate and graph results.
- Plan an advertising/poster campaign to promote the program or the issue.
- Write letters to key people discussing your views on the subject.

© September 1995, Victor H. Lamkay

TELEVISION AND CHILDREN

Continued from 1

technology, is the key to the potential of any medium.

None of the following myths are supported by substantive research. In fact, research has often contradicted them. Unfortunately, the propagators of these myths have done a much better job of marketing their opinions to the public than the researchers who have done the studies to debunk them. So here I present, in point-counterpoint fashion, five pervasive myths about TV.

MYTH #1
TV is a passive medium. My child will become a listless couch potato.
FACT #1
Educational TV shows can actively engage your child, physically and intellectually. The activity can, and should, continue after the show is over.

▼

There are at least two types of passivity: physical and intellectual. One of the most common myths about TV viewing is that it is, by definition, a passive activity. Contrary to popular belief, neither physical nor intellectual passivity is an immutable fact of TV viewing, especially for children.

As any parent of a child who watches *Barney* or *Sesame Street* knows, young viewers are physically engaged, singing, dancing, clapping, and stretching along with their favorite characters, especially when the shows invite them to do so. Programs such as these also encourage intellectual activity as children learn important concepts, from counting to kindness.

One overlooked and underused feature of television is its ability to prompt viewers to read aloud. Remember the days of singing along with the words on a screen, as a bouncing ball led you through the lyrics? Some current children's shows, such as *Ghostwriter* and *Beakman's World*, use animation and graphics to highlight key words for viewers to read and pronounce as they are watching.

A U. S. Department of Education study found that "contrary to popular assertions, children are cognitively active during television viewing in an attempt to form a coherent, connected understanding of television programs." The activity shouldn't cease after the show is over. The best children's programs provide follow-up activities and tips for teachers, child care providers, and parents. Whether it's folding origami with Shari Lewis of *Lamb Chop and Friends*, writing a letter to *Ghostwriter*, or borrowing a *Reading Rainbow* book from the library, TV can be a creative source of active learning, rather than the presumed death of it.

MYTH #2
TV stunts the healthy growth of the brain. It zaps a child's brain waves.
FACT #2
Brain wave patterns during TV viewing are very similar to brain activity during other activities.

▼

Some media critics have suggested that TV viewing has a deleterious effect on brain development. Because TV is a visual medium, they believe it may overstimulate the right hemisphere (responsible for visual processing) and understimulate the left hemisphere (responsible for language and processing of print). The critique often invokes technical language about "frontal lobe development," "neural pathways," and "alpha and beta waves," creating confusion and concern in the minds of many parents.

Dr. Jane Healy, an educational psychologist, detailed this critique in her book, *Endangered Minds*. While acknowledging the paucity of research on the topic, she felt compelled to make the following claim:

> ...research strongly indicates that [TV] has the potential to affect both the brain itself and related learning abilities.... Not only left-hemisphere language systems, but also higher-order organizational abilities, including the all-important control, motivation, and planning functions of the prefrontal lobes, may be in jeopardy for children...

These statements can seem plausible, especially when made in the jargon of medical authority. A neuroscientist's authoritative review should put these fears to rest. Dr. Katharine Fite of the Neuroscience and Behavior Program at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, has concluded:

> In recent years, a number of claims have appeared in the popular media and press suggesting that television viewing has potentially detrimental effects on human brain development and/or brain activity. An extensive review of the published scientific literature provides no evidence to substantiate such beliefs.

Fite described two major findings from experiments that measured small electrical signals from the scalp, indicating brain activity. These studies found that during TV watching, viewers' brain wave patterns are "quite similar to those that occur during other waking state activities. Thus, TV viewing should not be characterized as producing a passive or inattentive activity in the brain." She also reported that TV is not, as argued, exclusively a right-brain activity. Instead, "both cortical hemispheres are in-

volved in the information processing that is associated with the complex sensory and perceptual experiences that accompany television viewing."

Educators and parents should rest easier, knowing this alarm about our children's gray matter is only a red herring. Instead, we should be devoting our own brain waves to the more important questions of what, and how much, our children are watching.

MYTH #3
TV shortens a child's attention span.
FACT #3
Educational TV shows can actually increase a child's attention and cognitive skills.

▼

Myth #3 and its close cousin, Myth #2, have been propagated by a small but prolific group of writers who often turn their attack on one specific program. The object of their reproach? Not *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*, nor *The Mighty Morphin Power Rangers*. No, none other than *Sesame Street*. The critique is an academic hit-and-run, since these individuals do not stop to conduct any research of their own, nor do they cite the wealth of research already available on the program.

Sesame Street is the most widely researched television program in history. A bibliography published by Children's Television Workshop (CTW) in 1989 lists 633 studies on the positive cognitive and social effects of the program. Yet, some academics and writers insist that *Sesame Street* is a hazard to children's development. As Dr. Daniel Anderson, professor of psychology at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, explains, these critics believe that the "rapid transitions between scenes...mesmerize children and interfere with their reflection and inference, so that the child is left only with memories of a jumbled, disconnected set of visual images."

Anderson, who has conducted the most thorough research on the effects of *Sesame Street* on children's attention spans, believes these critics do not give young children enough credit for their already developed and purposeful cognitive skills. He summarizes the research findings:

> The new research showed that the critique was wrong. The child viewer of *Sesame Street*, rather than being a mesmerized zombie, is selective and intellectually active.... [The children's] attention to, and comprehension of, the program increases throughout the preschool years.... We have evidence that *Sesame Street* actually enhances attentional and perceptual abilities.... Research on *Sesame Street* has shown us that young children are far more capable than we previously believed, and *Sesame Street* itself has shown us the extraordinary potential of television as a medium of education.

MYTH #4
If my child watches TV, she'll turn out to be a poor student.
FACT #4
It depends on what and how much she's watching. Students who watch a moderate amount of television, especially educational TV, can be excellent students.

▼

The research on this topic will surprise many. Dr. Keith Mielke, vice president for research at Children's Television Workshop, has examined reviews of research on the relationship of TV viewing to academic achievement. The studies point out what is commonly touted: that very high levels of TV viewing (35 or more hours per week) negatively correlate with academic achievement. This makes sense, as children who are watching excessive amounts of TV do not have time to do much else. But several of the studies found that academic achievement was positively related to a moderate amount of TV viewing, on the order of ten to fifteen hours per week.

The real issue, Mielke points out, is not the sheer number of hours a child watches, but what programs she's watching—and how parents and teachers use programs to help maximize learning. More research is needed to help us understand these relationships. Most probably, children who watch 40 hours of TV or more each week are not watching much educational fare. It is also likely that kids who watch a moderate amount receive some strong parental messages about what to watch as well as what to do with the rest of their time, with the focus on educational programming and activities.

MYTH #5
If my child watches TV, he won't become a good reader. TV and books are enemies.
FACT #5
Quality children's programs can actually motivate children to read books and lead to a love of reading.

▼

This curious and widespread belief holds that TV viewing is antithetical to book reading and that kids who watch TV will not be good readers. I believe this myth is tied to a larger cultural bias: an intellectual snobbery in favor of books and against TV. Joan Ganz Cooney, originator of *Sesame Street* and founder of the Children's Television Workshop, has clarified

the issue: "Thoughtful people would not argue that because children read comic books, they should not therefore do any additional reading in school. Yet they apply a similar argument to the medium of television."

This pro-book, anti-TV bias doesn't stand up against the evidence of specific TV shows that encourage the reading of books. A high-quality children's TV show can foster a love of books, as *Reading Rainbow* proves so well. After viewing this program, children are so eager to get their hands on its recommended books that librarians and bookstore owners report dramatically increased circulation and sales. In one study, 86% of children's librarians said the series was responsible for increased circulation. Mimi Kayden, director of children's marketing for E. P. Dutton, has said, "Books that would sell 5,000 copies on their own sell 25,000 copies if they're on *Reading Rainbow.*"

This phenomenon is certainly not limited to children. Ken Burns' *The Civil War*, Bill Moyers' *Healing and the Mind*, and James Burke's *Connections*, each based on a PBS series, have been best-selling books. We now know that after watching an especially moving or informative TV show, viewers will want to read a book about it.

LEARNING IS A VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY

"Students [can] learn...present-day subject matter in a third or less of the present time, pleasurably rather than painfully.... Education in a new and greatly broadened sense can become a lifelong pursuit for everyone. To go on learning...[is] a purpose worthy of humankind's ever-expanding capacities. Education, at best, is ecstatic."

—George Leonard
Education and Ecstasy

Our job as educators and parents should be to make learning joyful and stimulating—as George Leonard says, ecstatic. In our culture, there is a strong belief that learning is serious, hard work. It does take years of discipline and commitment to obtain an education and master a career.

However, the best way to involve young children in the lifelong learning process is to expose them to the joys of learning early on. PBS's children's programs, from *Sesame Street* to *Ghostwriter* to *The Magic School Bus* and *Bill Nye, The Science Guy*, are committed to the proposition that learning and enjoyment go hand-in-hand. Instead of condemning TV for communicating this revolutionary idea, we should focus on making other educational experiences more lively and engaging. For instance, the best children's and science museums are places where kids want to go, where they are actively engaged with exhibits, museum staff, teachers, parents, and each other.

Home-schoolers Jennifer and Steven Stack of Canyon Country, California, have found ways to weave "learning webs" for their young boys, involving TV, computers, and hands-on experiences. Based on viewing Scholastic's *The Magic School Bus*, reading related books, and exploring *The Magic School Bus* CD-ROM, the 5- and 6-year-old brothers have dug up ant holes for their ant farm, created food chains from magazine pictures to decorate their living room wall, and observed the decomposition rate of hot dogs and cheese. Mrs. Stack observes, "I tried to introduce some science with magnets and gardening, but it was *The Magic School Bus* that got the boys doing things. That's where we really took off with science."

In the end, learning is a voluntary activity. Whether we're 6 or 60, we can't be forced to learn. TV viewing in the home is also a voluntary activity, something our children do because they want to, for positive as well as not-so-positive reasons. The fact that children like TV and computers is something we can build on. When TV and computer programs are well designed, they appeal not only to children's funny

DEVELOPING YOUR CHILD'S CRITICAL TELEVISION-VIEWING SKILLS

BY EILEEN HATRICK-SADEH

Here are some simple guidelines and practical suggestions to ensure healthy, balanced television viewing:

- **Discuss with your family why limiting television viewing is important and the significance of balancing it with other activities.**
- **Together, decide what your family's daily television viewing limits will be (two hours or less is recommended).**
- **Make a list of alternative activities such as skating, reading a book, working on a hobby, or listening to music. Make a rule that before watching television your child must do something from the list.**
- **Watch programs together as a family and discuss them afterwards: What's the message? How would you have changed the story?**
- **Explain what commercials are and that the prime purpose of commercial television is to sell the sponsors' products. Remember that most children under six have trouble distinguishing between commercials and the programs.**
- **Get everyone in the habit of muting the television during commercials.**
- **Don't watch television during family meals.**
- **Realize that if you are a heavy television viewer, your children will be, too.**
- **Encourage your children to watch quality programs—good television offers educational benefits and entertainment.**

EILEEN HATRICK-SADEH is principal of Dahlia Heights Elementary School in Los Angeles.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

bones but to their hearts and minds as well. ■

MILTON CHEN, Ph.D., is director of the KQED Center for Education & Lifelong Learning in San Francisco. Portions of this article were adapted from his recent book, *The Smart Parent's Guide to Kids' TV* (KQED Books, 1994, $8.95). Copies are available from the Public TV Order Line, 1-800-358-3000.

REFERENCES

Anderson, D. (1985, December). *The influence of television on children's attentional abilities.* Unpublished paper, Department of Psychology, University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

Fite, K. V. (1993). *Television and the brain: A review.* Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts.

Healy, J. (1990). *Endangered minds: Why our children don't think.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Rowley, L. (1995, December). Blast off on the bus! *Cable in the Classroom.*

HAIKU

After the wet rain
the leaves are so very clean
all dust washed away

Leaves fluttering down
against the cold earthly ground
soon to be covered

Rachel V[illegible]o, age 12
Grade 7, Georgetown Middle School
Georgetown, CA
Virginia Hilton, teacher

Explorations on the World Wide Web

BY DOROTHY CRUTCHER

Are your high school students entering the information superhighway in a woodie with flat tires and broken headlights? The Internet is already a necessity for all serious students. Some of the possibilities for this invaluable tool are investigating postsecondary education, researching course assignments, earning course credits, and communicating with others using a personal computer.

A high priority for every student needs to be the development of keyboarding/typing skills in order to converse on the highway. The old hunt and peck technique will seriously hinder the student's ability to maintain continuity and speed while conversing electronically. Therefore, if a college-bound student has not already taken a semester of keyboarding/typing, the student needs to take one immediately.

Furthermore, a growing trend among universities is the expectation that freshmen will be computer competent and ready to register electronically, communicate with faculty through the Net, submit essays by e-mail, and research libraries around the world using the Web.

Internet information specifically designed for college-bound students is expanding each day with creative opportunities for research, interaction, and learning. Some resources currently available are:

College Board Online
http://www.collegeboard.org
Although portions of the 1400 "screens" are still under construction, a student may now register electronically for the SAT.

Also check out:

- Fund Finder (the scholarship database)
- ExPAN (college, scholarship, and career searcher/college facts/electronic college application network)
- CSS PROFILE (financial aid service)
- CSS College Money Planner

Financial Aid Searches

- Student Services
  http://web.studentservices.com/fastweb/
- Financial Aid Form
  http://www/purdue.edu/DFA/scholar.html

College Searches

- College Guide
  http://www.jayi.comcom/sbi/ACG/CGTOC.html
- Colleges - USA/Foreign
  http://www.mit.edu:800l/people/cdemello/univ.html
- U. S. Colleges
  http://www.CLAS.ufl.edu/CLAS/american-universities.html

Math Competitions

- Math Archives
  http://www.math.harvard.edu/-kedlaya/competitions.html
- Internet Center
  http://www.mathpro.com/mathCenter.html
- International Olympiad
  http://www.win.tue.nl/win/ioi/imo/

Correspondence Courses

- Clearing House
  http://www.uwex.edu/disted/programs.html
- University of California
  e-mail:cmil@violet.berkeley.edu
- University of Kentucky
  http://www.occ.uky.edu/
- University of Nebraska
  http://www.uni.edu/cwis.html ■

DOROTHY CRUTCHER is the director of pupil personnel services for Huntington Beach Union High School District.

VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP ON THE CYBERTRAIL

Using the Alaskan Iditarod Sled Dog Race to differentiate the curriculum for gifted students

BY KAREN KRUPNICK

Like all teachers, I always keep an eye open for exciting new classroom ideas when I vacation. Several years ago, a trip to Alaska introduced me to the Iditarod Sled Dog Race, a grueling trek taking dog sled teams over more than 1,000 miles across the Alaskan wilderness. The more I learned, the more intrigued I became. I brought home some books to share with my class of gifted fourth graders, and with the help of the teaching materials supplied by the Iditarod Trail Committee, I was on my way! When the race began on the first Saturday in March, my class and I were ready to follow the excitement.

The history of the Iditarod Sled Dog Race is as exciting as the race itself. The route recalls a tense time in 1925 when a diphtheria epidemic swept through Nome. Serum was needed to halt the quickly spreading disease, but Nome was remote and planes were still new and untested in the sub-freezing temperatures. It could be sent by train from Anchorage for part of the journey, but the rest of the way was frozen and isolated. The solution was found by rallying together top-notch dog sled drivers and forming a relay team. The serum was passed from one team to another until it reached the grateful people of Nome, and the epidemic was stemmed. News of the adventure spread around the country. One of the lead dogs, Balto, even had a statue of himself erected in New York's Central Park. The race, which begins in Anchorage and ends in Nome, is a celebration of this enormous dog sledding feat.

The race is a natural for classroom use. There is a wealth of high quality literature written about it, and cross-curricular activities spread into all areas. Gifted students will find an unlimited amount of research opportunities in the many facets of dog sledding and the Alaskan wilderness. Math and science activities also abound. Exciting as all of this is, now a new element has been added to make the race come alive in the classroom in a high-tech fashion—the Iditarod has gone online.

Over the past few years, there has been growing interest among online teachers about the Iditarod Sled Dog Race. Last year, *Scholastic Network* noted the interest and asked me to coordinate a project dealing with the race for its members. Information about the history and logistics of the race was posted, as well as the logistics of the race itself and activities to integrate it into the curriculum at any grade level. Over 150 teachers from across the country signed on to participate in the project which included literature discussions, interactive question-and-answer sessions with experts, and even a "live" chat with former Iditarod champion, Martin Buser.

Once the race began, daily updates were posted to let everyone know where their favorite mushers were along the trail. For those with access to the World Wide Web, a home page was also available with updated information. Teachers were able to follow along as each musher passed under the final arch in Nome just by turning on their computers.

In an age of increasing technology in our world and in our classrooms, this online adventure clearly points out a role that the Information Superhighway can play in enhancing the classroom curriculum. While dog teams crossed some of the harshest wilderness on Earth under the most challenging of conditions,

children across the country were able to follow and share the excitement of the experience right in their own classrooms simply by turning on their computers. In a matter of minutes, they were able to receive answers to their questions by experts who were thousands of miles away and sometimes even while they were still online!

In addition, teachers were able to share techniques for using the information about the race in creative and innovative ways. We were all able to bounce ideas back and forth instantly, as though we were all sitting in the same room. While the race was in progress, it was as though we were all there watching the events. It was truly a "virtual field trip"!

The project will be repeated again this year on the *Scholastic Network*, and those with web access can find the Iditarod Trail Committee's home page at the following Internet address (URL): http://alaska.alaskan.com/Iditarod/.

We may all feel the pinch of funding cutbacks in education, but in this era of telecommunications, the world is only as far away as our computers. ■

Karen Krupnick is currently the language arts moderator for the Scholastic Network and is writing a book about the Internet for elementary school teachers.

CURRICULUM

TECHNOLOGY: Tools to Enhance Learning

BY JEAN SAIS

Today's technology should be thought of as a series of specialized tools which can enhance learning and teaching. These tools include computers, CD-ROMs, laser discs, video tapes, satellite transmissions, automated libraries, and the Internet.

When used to teach the core curriculum, these tools' potential to contribute to learning is unlimited. Young people are irresistibly drawn to the sights and sounds of technology. The excitement, the graphics, the interactivity all reach out to grab their attention like nothing else they've ever experienced.

Incorporating multimedia technology as an integral part of the core curriculum will:

- involve students as active learners;
- allow students to work at their own pace;
- encourage creative original expression;
- empower students to take on new roles as peer tutors, leaders in learning explorations, and organizers of collaborative work groups; and
- give students the opportunity to use the tools of technology that are being used in the world of business.

Making technology tools available to all students is the ultimate goal. Schools should incorporate this need into their regular budget planning and treat computer and software acquisition just like textbooks, paper, and pencils.

Grant writing, donations, and partnership programs can assist in the rate of acquisition, but all schools must develop the mindset that technology has become a necessity rather than a luxury.

When making technological decisions, it is important to address long-term as well as short-term goals. Immediate access to as much technology as you can afford is important in beginning the process of integrating these tools into your program. Having a long-range plan will provide information to guide purchases and assure that each new acquisition will expand and build on what the school already has in use. The California Department of Education has an excellent resource entitled *Building the Future, K-12 Network Technology Planning Guide* (Stock No. 1166N).

Deciding whether a classroom or lab will become the area for computers will depend on the number of computers available and the size and needs of your school. A lab is excellent for training and large-group work sessions, yet to really incorporate these tools into the entire curriculum, they need to be located where students will have access on a daily basis. A combination of both settings would be an ultimate goal, but focusing on the classroom as a beginning point will allow students greater access and will facilitate using the computer in an ongoing, daily basis.

Based on my experience working with 1st- through 5th-grade classes, a beginning point for using the computer as a tool (as opposed to a drill-and-practice activity) is to have the students become comfortable with word processing activities. Writing, which has become an interdisciplinary activity, is an excellent avenue to computer literacy.

Selecting a basic, integrated program such as ClarisWorks for the entire school will allow for

Student at Humphreys Math/Science/Technology Magnet Center in Los Angeles works in the school's computer lab.

continued growth as the students pass from grade to grade. A common program also facilitates sharing between classrooms, teachers, and grade levels. Using the spreadsheet portion of the program for graphing activities assists in math lessons as well as in the presentation of data for science and social studies reports.

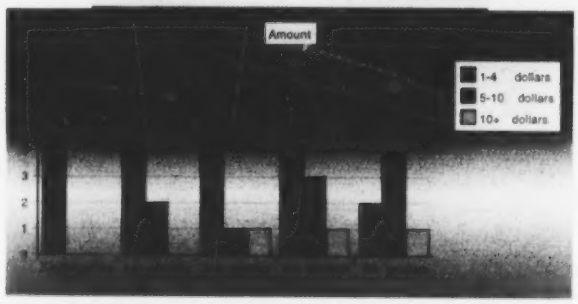
Another valuable program is HyperStudio. This program is used to develop presentations in the form of HyperCard-type stacks; these stacks can incorporate text, graphics, animation, video clips, and audio clips (student recordings). Students can begin with simple two- or three-card presentations that are easy to assemble and impressive. The more advanced HyperStudio user can design multiple level presentations with a variety of multimedia adaptions. A free Preview Disk of this software can be obtained by calling Roger Wagner Publishing, Inc., at 1-800-421-6526.

A growing number of reference materials are available on CD-ROM such as Microsoft's *Encarta* multimedia encyclopedia, and *Bookshelf* (a multimedia library that includes seven of the most frequently used reference books available, such as *Roget's Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases, Columbia Dictionary of Quotations,* and *The Hammond Atlas*). These programs come with Teacher Activity Guides which contain suggestions for integrating their use into the classroom. The materials allow students to investigate further and in greater depth than was formerly possible using traditional reference books.

Most important, teachers should collaborate with colleagues and share successes as well as failures. They should help build the technological expertise of the entire staff and student body. They should be willing to spend the time it takes to learn new programs and new ways of doing things; this will save time in the long run and reap great rewards by expanding the enthusiasm and vigor with which students address learning. ■

How Much Money Do You Get in A Week?
By Raul Razo and Ana Martinez

	A	B	C	D
1	Amount	1-4 dollars	5-10 dollars	10+ dollars
2	Kindergarten	5	0	0
3	1st graders	7	2	0
4	2nd graders	7	1	1
5	3rd graders	5	3	1
6	4th graders	2	4	1



Spreadsheets help students collect, analyze, and graph data. The result integrates math with social studies and/or science.

JEAN SAIS is the coordinator of Humphreys Math/Science/Technology Magnet in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She also coordinates the center's Gifted and Talented Program and its participation in the Creativity Pilot Project, designed to screen and identify students as gifted in the area of creativity.

Working with the Community

Monlux Math/Science/Technology Magnet in North Hollywood chose to put computers in the classroom as opposed to having a lab. Frustrated by the lack of funds for a telephone line, the Magnet Coordinator, Diane Seligson, approached the local Rotary Club which donated the money needed.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you are *not* already a CAG member, please use the application below to become a continuing supporter of gifted education. Because CAG is active in lobbying efforts to promote appropriate education for gifted and talented students, dues payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

NAME: _____ (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Middle Initial)

PREFERRED ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ COUNTY: _____

PHONE: Home ( ) _____ Work ( ) _____ AFFILIATION: _____ (School district of employment or attendance)

MEMBERSHIP/SERVICE CATEGORY
(for mailing addresses outside the U.S., add $10)

- ☐ Individual ($50)
- ☐ Family ($60)
- ☐ Patron ($100)
- ☐ Sponsor ($300)
- ☐ Life ($500)
- ☐ Benefactor ($1000)
- ☐ Limited Income ($20, attach letter)
- ☐ Communicator Subscription only ($25)

ROLE

- ☐ Administrator/Coordinator
- ☐ Board of Education Member
- ☐ Consultant
- ☐ Counselor/Psychologist
- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other

SPECIAL SKILLS/INTERESTS

- ☐ Art/Music
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Computers
- ☐ Advocacy/Legislation
- ☐ Other

PAYMENT ENCLOSED

- ☐ Personal Check #
- ☐ District Check
- ☐ Purchase Order #

CHARGE: ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card No. _____

Exp. Date _____

Mail with check or charge information to California Association for the Gifted,
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040; Phone: 415/965-0653, Fax: 415/965-0654

California Association for the Gifted
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19 ■ Mountain View, CA 94040
Phone: 415-965-0653 ■ FAX: 415-965-0654

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Canoga Park, CA
Permit #330

Association for the Gifted
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091

Time Value
Dated Material

COMMUNICATOR

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

VOLUME 27, NO.3, SUMMER 1996

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

REFLECTIONS

CAG Reflections
An historical journey through the milestones of the California Association for the Gifted.

Parent Involvement
How did parents of gifted students become an important force in advocacy efforts?

The Rosetta Stone or the Blarney Stone?
Thoughts on traveling to Europe with children.

Reflections on Walking with Roger
What is it really like to be behind the scenes with this software publisher?

On the Home Front
How to turn your summer vacation into a learning experience.

Young People's Pullout
An expanded section for summer reflection.

Just a Teacher
A special feature to ponder.

CAG Reflections

BY JUDY ROSEBERRY

In spring 1962, a few coordinators of the fledgling programs for the gifted met for lunch with Ruth Martinson in the faculty dining room at Long Beach State College. Martinson had been the director of the three-year state study on Programs for the Gifted which resulted in the original legislation for the gifted beginning with the 1961–62 school year. The purpose of that first meeting was to share successes, problems, needs, and curriculum ideas for the newly implemented programs for the gifted.

The small group, which included Martinson, Jeanne Delp, Sandy Williams, Eleanor Manning, and Gertrude Wood, decided there was a need for continuing discussion. Little by little, the group grew and met on a monthly basis through the fall of 1962.

In the spring of 1963, the first annual conference was held on the campus of Long Beach State

See CAG REFLECTIONS, 24

Gifted and Talented Education Moves Forward

BY CATHERINE BARKETT

Gifted and talented education (GATE) is alive and well in California! GATE is one of several state categorical programs that provides special funding for students with special needs.

State law provides local flexibility in defining how students are identified and designing programs to meet student needs, as long as programs and services meet the minimum standards.

The $31.5 million allotted to district and county offices provides an impetus for educators, parents, and students to examine whether students are sufficiently challenged.

With the potential for increased funding in 1996–97, all districts in California may qualify for GATE funding, and districts currently receiving GATE funding may be

See GIFTED AND TALENTED, 26

CONTENTS

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

1 **CAG Reflections**
Judy Roseberry

1 **Gifted and Talented Education Moves Forward**
Catherine Barkett

7 **Parent Involvement: Past & Future**
Sharon A. Freitas

9 **The Rosetta Stone or the Blarney Stone? Thoughts on Traveling in Europe With Children**
Raenele Côté

10 **Reflections of CAG's First Parent President: An Interview With Martha Flournoy**
Marilyn Morrison and Martha Flournoy

14 **Reflections on Walking With Roger**
Hall Davidson

27 **Technology: Reflections of a Sixth-Grade Teacher**
Ginger Britt

31 **Multimedia Reflections**

3 **Calendar**

3 **Letters**

4 **From the President**

5 **From the Editor**

5 **News Notes**

6 **On the Home Front** How to Turn Your Summer Vacation Into a Learning Experience, Marilyn Morrison

12 **Book Review** *Reclaiming the Wasteland: TV & Gifted Children*, review by Judy Lieb

15 **Young People's Pullout**, Linda Brug

23 **Just a Teacher,** Angel Barrett

PUBLISHED BY THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

Executive Director, Carol Brown Spencer
415.965.0653 Fax 415.965.0654

The CAG Communicator is published four times during the year: Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer. Opinions expressed by individual authors do not necessarily represent official positions of the Association. Subscriptions are available to non-members at an annual cost of $25.00.

OFFICERS 1994–1996

Executive Committee

President: Martha Flournoy
Vice President: Margaret Gosfield
Secretary: Marge Hoctor
Treasurer: Judith Roseberry
State Parent Council Chair: Vera Eby
Past President: Sandra Kaplan

Regional Representatives

Bay Area	Joyce Kutaka Kennedy
	Patty Bort
Capitol	Deanne Quinn
	Sharon Freitas
Joshua Tree	Margaret Jones
	Emilie Neher
Mission	Vicki Steinitz
	Amalia Rodriguez
Mt. Shasta	Barbara Fox Roumasset
	Lyra Josefsson
Orange	Iris Yamaoka
	Karen Grinfeld
Pacific	Linda Calvin
	Judy Smith
Palomar	Dave Hermanson
	Pat Paluso
Redwood	Carol Butzbach
	Myra Kaye
San Joaquin	Donna Denham
	Lisa Waters
Santa Lucia	Geri Williams
	Margaret Rodrigues

COMMUNICATOR EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: Vicki Bortolussi
Associate Editors
Curriculum: Angel Barrett
Children's Topics: Linda Brug
Parents: Marilyn Morrison
Special Projects: Lisa Heimlich
Technology: Judy Lieb
Production: Madsteve
Special Assistance: Reneé Hansen

SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL

To submit articles for publication, send hardcopy and a 3.5-inch disk (Mac or PC) saved as a text (ASCII) file. All submissions will be given careful consideration. Photos and camera-ready artwork are particularly desirable. Send all material with your name, address, phone number, fax number, and Internet address to Vicki Bortolussi, *Communicator* Editor, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Rd., Moorpark, CA 93021 Tel: 805-378-1405, vckib@aol.com

REPRINTING OF MATERIALS

Articles appearing in the *Communicator* may be reprinted as desired unless marked by © or reprinted from another source. Please credit the *Communicator* and send a copy of your publication containing the reprint to the Editor.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LETTERS

Thank you, Dottie!

The organization of the CAG annual conference with regard to exhibitors just gets better and better. The lady in charge, Dorothy Henson-Parker, is a jewel. She really TOOK charge, seeing that people were out of the Exhibit Hall on time, being present in the hall to forestall problems. Security was tight, the decorating and dravage companies were efficient. Not only was there a room where exhibitors could get coffee or water, she sent volunteers who brought it directly to the booth when we couldn't get away.

Exhibitors' presentations used to be thirty minutes, didn't they? The hour and a quarter is long enough to present a real session or a workshop. As an exhibitor/presenter, I was treated as regally as any other presenter. (Thank you for the nice gifts!) Even though I was the GATE teacher in Los Altos (my history even includes a demonstration class taught one mid-sixties summer in Sacramento for Project Talent), I always felt more honored for presentations given at math conferences.

I hope you will see that everyone involved gets the high praise which is their due.

Margo Seymour
Palo Alto, CA

HOW TO REACH CAG

MAIL
Write to Carol Brown Spencer, Executive Director, CAG, 426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040

PHONE OR FAX
To reach the CAG Office by telephone, call 415-965-0653; to contact by FAX, dial 415-965-0654.

AMERICA ONLINE
Direct inquiries to the CAG Office via America Online. Our e-mail address is cbs2000@aol.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Write to Dr. Vicki Bortolussi, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Road, Moorpark, CA 93021. Tel: 805-378-1405, vckib@aol.com

WEB SITE
http://members.aol.com/cagifted/cag.htm

CALENDAR

JUNE 25–30, 1996
Tenth International Conference on the Autonomous Learner Model: Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom, Middle School Gifted, Multiple Intelligences, and the Social and Emotional Needs of the Gifted. Estes Park, Colorado; $375 registration. Details available from 1-800-345-2577.

JULY 8–19, 1996
Confratute '96, University of Connecticut: Joseph Renzulli, director; Sally Reis, coordinator. Two weeks of coursework in gifted education with a focus on total school improvement through the application of instructional strategies. For registration brochure, call 860-486-4905.

AUGUST 2–4, 1996
15th Annual Conference of SENG (Supporting the Emotional Needs of the Gifted) Cuyahoga Falls, OH. Topics include emotional aspects of giftedness, understanding G/T teens, achievement v. underachievement. Contact College of Continuing Studies, Kent State University, 216-672-3237.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 28–March 2, 1997

35th Annual CAG Conference

Sacramento

AUGUST 9–10, 1996
Congress V sponsored by California Alliance for Elementary Education, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Burlingame.

AUGUST 12–13, 1996
Early Childhood Education Conference, "The Bridge to Success." Radisson Hotel, Sacramento. Full conference $94 if postmarked by July 12. Call 916-277-6021.

AUGUST 12–13, 1996
Eighth Annual Northern California Early Childhood Education Conference, Sacramento, for educators, administrators, parents, and board members. For registration info, call San Juan USD, 916-971-7375.

SEPTEMBER, 1996
CAG launches the 1996 Certificate of Completion program. CAG members should watch their summer mail for a brochure giving full details.

FEBRUARY 28–MARCH 2, 1997
35th Annual CAG Conference, "Discover Gold! Mining Gate Resources." Hyatt Regency Hotel and Sacramento Conference Center.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARTHA FLOURNOY

Not so long ago I flew to San Jose to meet a new and focused group of people who had the same interests, but came from many different places. I shared a room with a woman who was only a name to me. We were to share regional representative responsibilities. I was embarking on a journey that would lead me to places both exciting and awesome as well as frustrating and challenging. I would meet people that were previously only names in books or authors of articles. I would meet parents and grandparents with stories or problems to share. I would meet teachers who challenge and inspire children. This journey was my involvement with CAG. I was unprepared. I don't know what could have prepared me. I was a parent of two gifted girls. I was involved in their education. I had a presence at their schools. I was involved on a local level and had been a positive influence in representing and promoting the GATE program in our district. However, I had never visited a politician. I had only a glancing relationship with how local funds are allocated. Only when the program was threatened would parents gather. There was much to learn.

I have learned so much since that time not so long ago. Six years have passed quickly. I have learned that sharing of information is of utmost importance. Getting parents, students, teachers, community members, and politicians together is very powerful and important. We need to educate not only our students, but those who have a say over what is taught, how it is taught, and the allocation of money which will provide for the teaching. I now go to politicians without hesitation. I speak more often and confidently about our children. I have some facts and figures, but even more experiences and examples of things that work.

I have learned much about CAG. CAG has great support. It is supported by you, the membership. It is supported by the Board members who volunteer their time, expertise, and emotional energy to advocate for gifted and talented students in our State. We have been successful in some areas and districts and not so successful in others. We all have talents and gifts to contribute. We all have a place in which to make our contributions. Some of us are more visible than others, but we all contribute. There is always work to be done and rarely an overabundance of volunteers. We can use more help at all levels. We welcome your support and encourage your increased involvement as we strive to provide the best education and services to gifted and talented students in our State.

I have learned what it is to run a Board meeting and to get things done. Needless to say, strong opinions are expressed on almost all subjects at Board meetings. Focusing such a group can be difficult. Reaching consensus can be a challenge. Again, in some areas we have been more successful than in others. One thing that has been consistently successful, however, is our annual conference. The conference provides the opportunity to exchange ideas, learn about current research, and share strategies that are useful for both parents and educators. It provides a forum for discussion of pertinent issues. It allows for brainstorming of solutions to challenges. Our Teacher Institutes provide more in-depth experience in differentiating the curriculum.

I have learned so much, but there is much more to learn and much more to be done. I want to thank those who have contributed to the accomplishments we have made and those who will continue to advocate in our State for the necessary support, training, and atmosphere, that encourages and challenges gifted and talented children.

Parents will always be parents. Roles, relationships, and responsibilities change. Teachers will always be teachers. Who, how, and what they teach may change. Advocates will always have the dedication, passion, and perseverance to promote their cause. These are the individuals who collectively make up CAG and make it strong. ■

FROM THE EDITOR

VICKI BORTOLUSSI

Summer vacation. Holiday. Furlough. Recess. Respite. Leave of absence. Recreation time. Sabbatical. Rest and recuperation. Intermission.

Summer vacation. Time to ponder, to consider, to contemplate, to reflect.

Reflection. Images. Representation. Likeness. Impression.

Thus, with the aid of a standard thesaurus, we present the summer issue of the *Communicator* for your reflection and for your vacation enjoyment.

Judy Roseberry reflects on the history of the California Association for the Gifted and Cathy Barkett looks forward to where gifted education is headed in the state of California. Outgoing CAG president Martha Flournoy delivers her parting message and answers questions about being the first CAG president elected from the ranks of the parent council. From and for parent ponderance, Marilyn Morrison helps you make the most of your summer vacation as does Raenele Côté with her European travel experiences.

While you are traveling, books and journals can be a part of real or imaginary journeys with suggestions from Judy Lieb, Jody Fickes Shapiro, and Sherry Sidesinger.

The Young People's Pullout gives us much to ponder about our educating and our parenting as we have an expanded version brimming over with special creativity to savor.

Children, of course, are the future. We clearly see this as we reflect on the technology experiences that students and faculty had during this year's CAG conference.

The next issue of the *Communicator* will focus on Politics as we head into an exciting fall with a national presidential election and all that may portend for the future. In the winter, the *Communicator* will explore Gifted At Risk. The spring issue theme will be that of the CAG Conference—Discover Gold: Mining GATE Resources. The Summer 1997 *Communicator* will explore educational systems. Then, in Fall 1997, we will consider Diversity. Start to ponder your thoughts on these topics and consider developing a comment or article, or suggest someone about whose thoughts and reflections you'd like to know more. Also, we welcome your letters any time on any topic related to gifted education and the *Communicator*.

The Summer 1996 *Communicator* reflects each and every one of us who cares about gifted education and all of its dimensions and deliberations. Leisurely ponder these pieces within. Consider. Question. Comment. Let us know your thoughts.

Summer reflections. Gaze into the mirror. Enjoy! ■

NEWS NOTES

New Board Members Elected

If you are a CAG member, your vote helped elect the following educators and parents to the CAG Board of Directors. The *Communicator* sends congratulations to CAG's newly elected and returning officers and representatives.

President: Margaret Gosfield
Vice President: Marge Hoctor
Secretary: Dana Reupert
Treasurer: Judith Roseberry
Parent Council Chair: Sharon Freitas

Mission Region
Parent Rep: Beth Petak-Aaron
Educator Rep: Nancy Epstein

Pacific Region
Parent Rep: Judith Smith
Educator Rep: Linda Calvin

Palomar Region
Parent Rep: Cheri Drummond
Educator Rep: Marcia DiJiosia

Joshua Tree Region
Educator Rep: John Delandtsheer

Orange Region
Parent Rep: S. Raenele Côté
Educator Rep: Iris Yamaoka

San Joaquin Region
Educator Rep: Donna Denham

Bay Area
Parent Rep: Patty Bort
Educator Rep: Judy Witt

Santa Lucia Region
Parent Rep: Margaret Rodrigues
Educator Rep: Geri Williams

Redwood Region
Parent Rep: Myra Kaye
Educator Rep: Bruce DeVries

Capitol Region
Parent Rep: Mary Paxton
Educator Rep: Nancy Craig

Mt. Shasta Region
Parent Rep: Marla Doherty

■

ON THE HOME FRONT

BY MARILYN MORRISON

HOW TO TURN YOUR SUMMER VACATION INTO A LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Actually, the title of this article is a bit misleading, because all of life is a learning experience. Children (and their parents) are learning things every day, whether we are sitting on a beach counting the grains of sand or touring the Louvre. Vacations, though, offer us the extra time to pursue some unusual opportunities to educate our children and broaden their horizons, as well as our own.

Travel, of course, is the ultimate learning experience. Pat Paluso, CAG's Parent Representative from the Palomar region, has been fortunate enough to take her two children (now in seventh and twelfth grades) to such far-flung places as Tahiti and Europe. The scrapbooks and videotapes her children made on these trips have proved to be valuable resources for many school projects since then. Paluso also recommends starting kids on a collection of postcards from their travels. It's an inexpensive way to remember where you've been, and the kids can select postcards of their favorite highlights.

Even if you can't afford a European vacation, remember that every region has a historical background and can be explored during weekends or when you're visiting relatives in other cities. Museums are an obvious educational choice, but don't expect your child to do them on an adult level. One mother, Vicki Fogel Mykles of Fort Collins, Colorado, has turned many museum trips into treasure hunts by asking her son, Christopher, to find the objects pictured in the guidebook. Purchasing a family membership at your local museum or zoo will allow you to drop in for frequent, short visits, focusing on a particular section or just saying "hi" to your child's favorite animal, without the pressure of "getting your money's worth" from a tiring, day-long excursion.

Hands-On History—Kids visit with costumed docents at Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

A few years ago, my family became devotees of living history museums. At museums such as Plimoth Plantation and Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts, Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia, and Fort Laramie in Wyoming, visitors meet costumed docents and participate in the daily life of these historical characters in their homes, stores, and farms. My children "toed the line" to recite spelling words in the one-room schoolhouse at Sturbridge, and helped a Pilgrim woman cook dinner in Plimoth. We all learned more and remembered more from these interactive experiences than from visits to any regular museum. Right here in California, you can find living history days at Hearst Castle, La Purisima Mission, and Fort Tejon State Historic Park, to name a few.

Other favorites of our family are industrial tours, such as the

Blue Diamond Growers almond factory in Sacramento, Glen Canyon Dam in Arizona, Hershey Chocolate U.S.A. in Oakdale, California, and wineries in Temecula and Napa Valley, California. These behind-the-scenes tours are especially appealing for parents trying to satisfy their gifted child's curiosity about how things work. The A.A.A. guidebook for every state lists industrial tours; many of them are free, but some have age restrictions. So call ahead.

If you are visiting a National Park for more than a day, or you are lucky enough to live near one, check out the Junior Ranger Program, which incorporates history, geography, and nature studies (as well as picking up trash!) in order to earn badges or certificates. The quality of the programs varies from park to park, and they are not always well advertised. You may wish to ask at the Visitors Center about their availability.

Often a lesser-known tourist attraction offers a more rewarding and exceptional experience than a famous one. On our way to the Grand Canyon, we went 30 minutes out of our way and took a fascinating tour of the Grand Canyon Caverns; it was reasonably priced and much less crowded than its namesake. Another summer, we spent an extra two days getting from Los Angeles to Lake Tahoe and explored the Gold Country, which boasts museums, gold panning, mine tours, and rustic scenery.

Many interesting learning experiences are waiting right in our own neighborhoods and summer vacation is the perfect time to seek them out. The Mykles make a special effort to expose their son, now nine years old, to new ethnic foods. They research the cuisine and shop for the ingredients to cook dinner at home, or go to a restaurant (Japanese, Moroccan, Vietnamese, Indian, German, etc.) and ask the waiter to describe the ingredients and the food's origins. Another local activity, especially good for city kids, is to take them to a pick-your-own-fruit orchard (we've tried cherries, apples, and berries), or help them plant a vegetable garden in the backyard. Seeing where our food comes from and how things grow is a great lesson and a rewarding family outing.

"The world's a wonderful place, with all sorts of fun stuff to do and experience." I think we would all agree with Vicki Fogel Mykles' observation, and share her desire for our children to grow up with open minds and interact with different kinds of people. Start exposing them to a wide variety of cultural and educational experiences at a young age, so that they are open to adventure and willing to try new things. Use your vacation time to seek out some offbeat learning experiences, and cherish the ones that come your way unexpectedly—this is the history and knowledge your family will remember the longest. ■

MARILYN MORRISON is the parent of two gifted children. She is the *Communicator* Associate Editor for Parent Topics.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT: PAST & FUTURE

BY SHARON A. FREITAS

I still carry a vivid memory of my first experience at a conference sponsored by the California Association for the Gifted. Sitting at the round table, I stared at the multitude of reflections in the jeweled crystal ceiling. I trembled as I realized that I had finally found them—the others who understood my passion. I would not be alone anymore!

Prior to that weekend, I had been the "lonely voice in the wilderness" in my school district as I advocated for the students identified as Mentally Gifted Minors (MGM). For those of you who joined the cause of gifted education after 1979, let me describe the early years of the GATE program and how CAG expanded to include parents at the leadership level.

Back to the Beginning

In 1961, the State of California began providing funds to school districts to identify and serve students who scored in the top two percent on an individual intelligence test. Many districts jumped on the bandwagon and began to test the top-achieving students just to get the $50 for each one who "passed." The first informational meeting held in the Sacramento area, where I live, had about 10 families represented as the school psychologist and the MGM resource teacher explained the parameters of the program and all the wonderful projects in which the identified students could be involved. Interested parents offered to assist with the weekly pull-out groups, drive on field trips, give lectures, and develop materials. The reality was, however, that the money allocated to the program provided for only a small amount of the resource

teacher's time and an even smaller amount for materials.

The classroom teachers had little knowledge of what the program was; the students were sometimes penalized for leaving the classroom to go to the MGM group, and parents had no one to ask about gifted education. They began to develop their "parent power" by going to school-board meetings and asking "What is being done for my child?" When many local school-district representatives could not give a suitable answer, the level of concern became contagious. Parents organized "coffees," contacted local legislators, and arranged public meetings featuring knowledgeable speakers. From events such as these, many organizations of and for parents were established. This groundswell of local organizations began to serve the needs of both parents and educators by offering Saturday seminars with guest speakers, holding monthly meetings to discuss issues and pending legislation, and sending representatives to a three-day conference sponsored by the California Association for the Gifted.

Parent Involvement Formalized

In 1979, Ruth Fenton, the chair of the CAG Parent Committee, was instrumental in the establishment of CAG's State Parent Council, whose primary goal was stated by Fenton as "to save the Program!" In an article for the *Communicator* that year, past-president Allyn Arnold praised the Council when he said, "These parents are dedicated and tireless workers who are intent upon that goal. They need the support of all parents who understand the urgency of expressing their advocacy for gifted education."

Fenton presided over the first conference of parent delegates from the 14 CAG regions, who then presented a resolution to Assemblyman Dennis Mangers as part of the proposed legislation to revamp the MGM program. At the State Parent Council business meeting held during the 1979 CAG conference in San Francisco, 2,000 parents heard such noted speakers as Jeanne Delp and Leo McCarthy, as well as elected officers of the newly established State Parent Council.

The parent representatives from each region provided support for legislation by serving as a link to the many local organizations that continued to grow. By 1982, there were 15 affiliate groups spread around the state. Continued threats to the validity of the GATE program, the dwindling of funds from the state budget, and issues such as vouchers demanded that both the affiliates and the parents be ready at a moment's notice to call and visit their legislators. This role for parents was further reinforced by the description included in *Advocacy Handbook for Gifted/Talented Education in California*, published by CAG in 1982.

Looking to the Future

Our children only travel through school once, for a limited number of years. Parents cannot afford to wait for budgets or trends to change and waste these critical learning years. The CAG State Parent Council intends to help parents by providing more regional parent institutes, conferences, and evening "coffees" as well as current information via a new publication, *CAG Parent Handbook*, and regional newsletters. A common thread throughout these increased efforts is to provide an opportunity for parents to ask themselves questions such as:

- Why are the gifted and talented children of California given a low priority when state and school district budgets are set?
- What have I done as an important parent voice in my community to ensure that the GATE program is continued, enhanced, and strengthened?
- Where do I start and who can help me make a difference for my child and other children in my district, region, and/or state?

Parents must enlighten and inform themselves about gifted education. Continued contact with representatives from your local school district, CAG affiliate organizations, and legislative members will provide the communication necessary to ensure that gifted students' special needs are recognized and met. ■

SHARON A. FREITAS is the mother of nine gifted children. She served as GATE program manager for the Elk Grove Unified School District for 25 years, and is the new CAG State Parent Council Chair for 1996-98.

America is Cool!

To me America is cool!
With blue-haired punks
and bald-headed monks
With crazy concerts
and expensive cars
To me America is cool
With skater skatin'
and surfers surfin'
With the stockmarket
and the supermarket
To me America is cool!

Bryan Minkel, age 13
Grade 7, DeAnza Middle School
Ventura
Linda Brug, teacher

The Rosetta Stone or The Blarney Stone?

Thoughts on Traveling in Europe With Children

BY RAENELE CÔTÉ

I have dreamed of taking my children to Europe ever since I saw Rosalind Russell, as Auntie Mame, sweeping up her grand staircase, a mural of Shangri-La in the background, proclaiming to her nephew, "I will open doors for you, doors you never even dreamed existed." No matter that I was only 10 years old the first time I saw "Mame"—I simply filed my dream for future reference.

Last summer, when my sons were 11 and 13, I dusted off my dream and headed for Europe with the boys in tow. We spent four weeks touring Ireland, England, and France, and I did open doors for them. But they were not always the doors I had planned on, and to my surprise, my children opened a few doors for me, too.

Children will only learn what they are *ready* to learn and what they *want* to learn. I had a long agenda of "must do/must see." Right at the top was a list of castles, manor houses, cathedrals, and churches. Very early in the trip, it became apparent that, to the boys, one cathedral is so much like any other that when you've seen one, there is little reason to waste your time on any more. (They applied the same rule to churches, castles, and manor houses.) At first, I was appalled that my children could be such philistines. On reflection, I have to admit that their reaction was understandable. You need historical perspective to truly appreciate these structures, and even though I had tried to prepare them, my boys did not have the necessary sense of history that comes only with maturity and education.

Furthermore, like all children, mine live entirely in the present and neither the past nor the future is very real to them. Even the Rosetta Stone, which we saw at the British Museum, failed to make much of an impression.

Despite their lack of sophistication, however, they thoroughly enjoyed Blarney Castle and the Normandy beaches. It was not, of course, the historical significance of these landmarks that thrilled them, but rather the interactive experience that they provided. No one stands around at Blarney Castle telling you not to touch anything or boring you with explanations of how people used to live. And there are no 'Keep Off' signs on the ruins of the German bunkers or in the shell holes on the bluffs at Omaha Beach. The boys could climb and crawl around, run and jump, touch and experience to their heart's content.

European Big Macs are no worse nutritionally than American ones. In addition to showing them the sights, I was looking forward to introducing my boys to European dining, especially French cuisine. Neither boy is a picky eater, so I thought it would be easy to interest them in trying the local fare. Perhaps I shouldn't have been surprised to find that they were far more excited about going into an Irish or English or French MacDonald's than they were about

THE RITE OF AUTUMN

As I watched the summer leaving
And shed her veils of green
From the rolling hills and valleys
And all that lay between,
Autumn tread most thoughtfully
Among the orchard trees
And masked his presence there
By the chill upon the breeze.
He kissed the leaves with scarlet
No rose could ever wear,
With his breath he set them dancing
Through the soft and smoky air.
The hills he donned with velvet brown,
The sunset rich with gold,
The skies he paints with violet
There the twilight will unfold.
How the earth is glorious
With autumn's fruitful boon
As he crowns her with the harvest
stars
And the silver harvest moon.

Sophie Pham, age 17
Grade 12, Fountain Valley High School
Fountain Valley
Janet Barkawi, teacher

experiencing pub food in the British Isles or café dining in France.

While we ate most of our meals in local restaurants, I did not veto the occasional American fast food lunch. Children sometimes just want what they are used to and certainly a Big Mac now and then didn't hurt them. Furthermore, I did not want to draw battle lines over food. Far more important than forcing them to try new foods was ensuring that they ate well-balanced meals at regular intervals. They have been introduced to continental dining; they have the rest of their lives to pursue the relationship.

Kids need to maintain their normal level of physical activity when they travel. Although traveling itself is physically exhausting, it is an exhaustion that comes from driving long distances, waiting in lines, and walking, walking, walking. Because I myself did not feel the need to engage in frequent periods of strenuous physical activity, I lost sight of the fact that my boys did. I was reminded almost immediately: we hadn't been driving more than two hours our first day on the road when I pulled off so we could see the view. The boys were out of the car like a shot and sprinting across the peat bog as fast as they could go. I admired the view; they experienced the countryside in a different and more personal manner.

Since we traveled mostly by car and had few advance reservations, we could stop whenever and wherever we wanted. These unscheduled, unplanned stops were vital to the children's health and good humor. In Ireland and England, the boys would watch for sheep that they could chase. In Provence, they skipped stones and waded in the streams. And whenever we had a picnic, whether it was at a roadside somewhere or in a park in the heart of a city, I always allowed as much time as they wanted to run around.

Traveling is always an adventure. Traveling with children is a 3-D adventure: you see things through the eyes of your children as you simultaneously see them through your own eyes. It is a joy to witness your children learning all that travel teaches. It is a joy to realize that you can learn from them, as well. ■

RAENELE CÔTÉ'S sons are in sixth and eighth grades in the Orange Unified School District.

Reflections of CAG's First Parent President

An Interview With Martha Flournoy

BY MARILYN MORRISON

I asked Martha Flournoy, who is finishing her two-year term as president of CAG, to comment on the experience and the significance of being the first president of the organization to come from the ranks of parents, rather than educators, of the gifted:

Q. How did you make the transition from concerned parent of a gifted child to leader of a large, statewide advocacy group?

A. As concerned parents, my husband and I have always been actively involved in the education of our children. After investigation, we decided to move our children from private school to our local public school program. We were impressed by the time students had to interact with their intellectual peers, as well as by the differentiation of the curriculum at all levels. I was asked to be on the district parent advisory council and soon found myself its chair. Our coordinator was very involved in a regional GATE coordinators group and kept up on current issues and events. My district allowed me to attend the annual CAG conference, which gave me access to a broader and more extensive knowledge base, thus raising my awareness and level of understanding. This coordinator asked me to run for the CAG Board as our region's parent representative. Because of my personal interest, as well as this encouragement, it never occurred to me to say no! I have never regretted it.

Q. Why did you want to serve as president of CAG?

A. There was a need and I felt that I had something to contribute. The encouragement and confidence from others weighed heavily in my decision. I have always believed in giving back and devoting time to issues and causes about which I am passionate.

Q. During your term, what obstacles and challenges faced you?

A. One obstacle for me, as a parent, was the lack of formal training in the field. The kind of knowledge about gifted children that I have is just that—gifted children, not gifted students. I did not have a sense of history, events, trends, or resources in the field, as a trained educator would. I was not familiar with the journals, basic texts, or organizations. The first few years on the Board allowed me to fill in some of the gaps, but I still have much to learn.

Q. What differentiated your approach to CAG from that of the educators who had previously served as president?

A. I began my two-year term with the charge to pilot some parent support groups and to work toward more parent involvement and focus. I feel that we have kept this goal in mind and that it is within reach.

Q. What did it mean to the organization to have a parent as president for the first time?

A. I hope that it meant good things for the organization as a whole. We talk about high expectations for our children and I think that we need high expectations for ourselves. Others encouraged me and expected that I could and would contribute to this organization, long before I did. The big thing is not that I am the first parent president, but that the goals and the professionalism are maintained, regardless of who is president. I do not think that there is or should be any division between parents and educators, but rather that each group brings ideas, perspectives, and understanding to the organization and that there is mutual respect.

"Facts and figures will never replace experiences and influences that people and programs have on a child. Parents need to become more involved politically in the issues surrounding gifted education and the needs of gifted children."

Q. What do you hope to see as the future role of parents in CAG?

A. As always, parents are in a position to advocate for their children as no one else can. This role will never change. Facts and figures will never replace experiences and influences that people and programs have on a child. Parents need to become more involved politically in the issues surrounding gifted education and the needs of gifted children. We are all in this together and need to be supportive of each other in achieving our goals.

Q. What have you personally gained from the experience of being president of CAG?

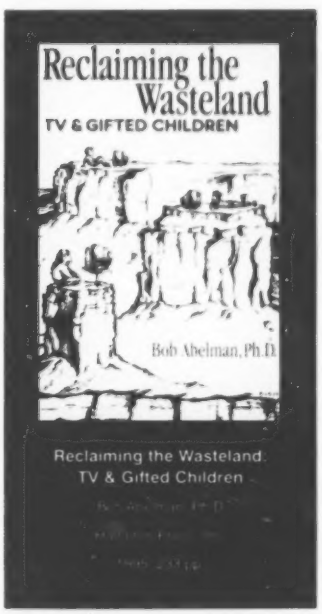
A. It is hard to narrow my personal gains into a few lines. I have found myself doing things I never would have envisioned. I am much more computer literate than I would have been otherwise. I have gained knowledge, perspective, and skills that will stay with me. I have had the opportunity to meet with leaders in the field, politicians who have the power to make or break the program, students, and professionals who feel as passionately as I do. I have made many wonderful friends. I have learned more about myself and about groups. I have learned how understanding, flexible, dependable, and supportive my family is. It has been an experience of a lifetime. ■

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BOOK REVIEW **REVIEW BY JUDY LIEB**

As an educator and parent, I found that *Reclaiming the Wasteland* provided me with a greater awareness of the positive and negative aspects of children's television viewing. Dr. Abelman takes the position that television viewing, if used correctly, can be an enriching and educational experience for gifted children.

Reclaiming the Wasteland is well organized and includes chapter summaries, TV tips, and valuable endnotes suggesting further research or reading. The following comments on the six chapters provides an overview of the work.



Kill the Messenger: The TV Effects Controversy

This first chapter sets the stage by describing some of the controversy that has surrounded children's television programming. The media professionals say that television has no effects on children. The social critics and media activists believe that television has powerful effects on all children. The government agencies try to protect the freedom of expression of broadcasters as well as look out for the public's interest. But, is television viewing "bad" for kids? Dr. Abelman takes the position espoused by Wilbur Schramm and others in the early '60s that "For some children, under some conditions, some television is harmful. For other children, under the same conditions, or for some children under other conditions, it may be beneficial" (p. 37). This theme runs throughout *Reclaiming the Wasteland*.

Facts About Giftedness/Questions About TV

Children take from TV. What they take from it and what they do with the information is up to the individual child. Abelman says that parents should not worry if their young gifted child watches lots of television because viewing time tends to decrease as the child grows older. Gifted children learn from TV and are attracted to it as a natural source of information. TV viewing is not a passive activity for gifted children. They are cognitively active while watching, and thus outgrow many of the programs for their age group and look for programs with more advanced plots and storylines (which may or may not be appropriate for them). Young gifted children are often able to identify the advertising techniques used in commercials for children, but not necessarily those found in advertising geared towards adults.

There are not many role models for gifted children on TV. Adolescent gifted children often believe the social and gender-role information presented on television unless this information is subjected to open family discussions about critical television viewing.

Why TV Fails Gifted Kids

Television programming has changed over the years—the "family hour" is a thing of the past. The author presents the following tips for parents of gifted children:

- Use the TV guide in the local paper to select appropriate shows.
- Use the VCR and library rentals as an alternative to broadcast TV.
- Subscribe to cable, if available and feasible, as many quality children's programs are found there.
- Avoid program-length commercials.
- Support public television (PBS).
- It's OK to let children watch TV just for fun.

The Reluctant Regulators

Abelman discusses how decisions of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) have affected the types of programs available during primetime on network TV. Many television activists have been able to make improvements in children's programming, culminating in the passage of the Children's Television Act of 1990. Abelman believes that this act "represents the best opportunity for gifted children to be served by local broadcasters" (p. 128), but that broadcasters still need to be educated as to the needs of gifted children.

Parental Discretion Advised

This chapter discusses television and family life and provides information about parent mediation in children's television viewing. Most parents of gifted children engage in participatory mediation with their children instead of restricting the amount of television watched. However, parents tend to underestimate the amount and types of television watched by their children, so mediation is often "too little and too late." Many types of activity charts that encourage children to think about how much, what, and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

why they watch television are provided. These activities would be excellent for use in a family setting.

The ABCs of TV Literacy

Dr. Abelman says that television has not destroyed our students. Television watched in school for educational purposes is more demanding of students than TV watched at home. Television can provide materials to help teachers differentiate the curriculum for gifted students and provide a "window to the world." Teachers need to be selective in their choice of television programs for student use and curriculum that is appropriate for teaching critical viewing skills in school.

In conclusion, Dr. Abelman emphasizes his message that total abstinence from television keeps viewers from enjoying high-quality, enriching programs. He urges parents to work with local broadcasters (where change is more likely to take place) to improve the quality of children's programming and to remember that above all, "Television is a storyteller and an entertainer" (p. 217). ■

Judy Lieb, Ed.D., is the GATE Coordinator in the Fullerton School District and the *Communicator* Associate Editor for Technology.

Farewell to Manzanar

(reflection on the book by John Houston)

"From our world through these portals to new horizons"
As apple orchards bloom in the spring
The moss is dripping the fresh dew.
Outside the children are playing
While Papa paints Mt. Whitney.
Mt. Whitney is outlined by the golden rays of the sun,
The sun of hope and freedom.
The people here have been confined
But now they know they must wake up,
Wake up to start their life
As a baby starts his or her life.
In the gates the people imagine.
They imagine the world without war.
Slowly the sun rises from the top of Mt. Whitney,
The sun in all its glory.
Still the people imagine no war or racism.
The sun melts the snow and dries the land.
These people originated from the land of the rising sun
But they have never seen a sun so full of hope as this one.
These people feel as a number and not as a person,
And the numbers are sad.
Soon they will have to say Farewell.
Soon their memories of this place will vanish.
Soon Manzanar will be a monument, not a camp.
Now I visit Manzanar and see a place
A place of misery.
Leave your memories here.
Pick up your pieces here.
But whatever you do, don't forget to say
Farewell, Farewell to Manzanar.

Matthew Steinberg, age 12
Grade 6, Oakwood Elementary School
North Hollywood
Michelle Weiss, teacher

Reflections on Walking With Roger

BY HALL DAVIDSON

After the opening session keynote at the California Association for the Gifted Conference in March 1996, Roger Wagner, the keynote speaker, and I wandered into the Speakers Hospitality Room. The Hospitality Room offered conference attendees the opportunity to meet the speakers or munch on ice cream sundaes, whichever seemed more valuable. Although there were a lot of people eating ice cream, a few folks did venture over to ask Roger a few very specific questions about technology and its application in their schools.

Roger is the publisher and guiding light for *HyperStudio*, an excellent program for multimedia authoring, building presentations, constructing student portfolios, and so on. I use *HyperStudio* for my own presentations and have taught it in workshops. As a fan of the program, I expected Roger to offer it as a magic bullet for every school situation, but he surprised me.

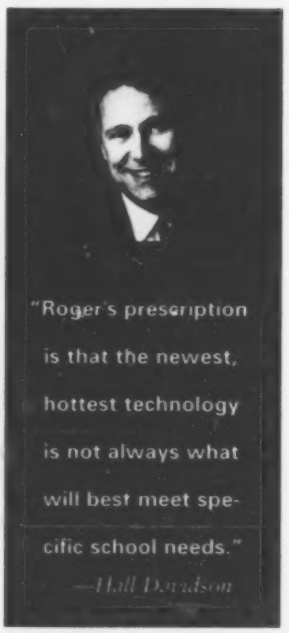
A teacher came to him with an exciting but daunting situation. She had been approached by her district to set up a magnet school for the arts. To show its commitment, the district was throwing in $7,000 for technology. Total. What technology should she buy? Roger ruminated for a moment then tapped his chin with his finger like Sherlock Holmes. "Before I tell you, are you willing to accept an answer that will make you rethink technology, force you to defend yourself before your board, and guarantee you will get grief from teachers and parents?" he asked. She swallowed, nodded, and took out her pen.

"Buy video cameras and VCRs," he said somberly. "More bang for the buck." He explained that cameras would allow everyone to construct projects with the same hardware. The technology would encourage and enhance much of the curriculum in an arts magnet and has the significant benefit of allowing students to publish on videotape (a recurring Wagnerian theme). Such VHS projects could be sent home or shared with other classes and schools. Videomaking, when done correctly, involves collaborative learning, problem solving, and yields a student product. Because students have such familiarity with the medium, video projects are strongly self-evaluated and self-correcting. Finally, video will prepare the school for the time when additional money becomes available, allowing for more technology purchases.

He was right, of course. I have taught videomaking workshops to GATE students in Fullerton and found that students absolutely "swam" into the technology. Without being told, they incorporated computers for titling and mixers for music. And, as young people above all, they wildly applauded their own names in the credits as they made copies of their project for each team member.

The subtext of Roger's prescription is that the newest, hottest technology is not always what will best meet specific school needs. Rarely, in fact. The entry point of technology into a school is becoming less critical since the unstoppable convergent nature of technology will soon put us in an environment where word processing, video, graphics, and more will be immutably part of a single application. So, you might as well begin where the buck bangs biggest (where the most impact is made on students).

When you think about it, the recommendation of a software publisher to buy video cameras is not so strange. If you want a friendly peek at what the future's convergent technology platform will look like, try *HyperStudio*. It imports video (from cameras, VCRs, laser discs, etc.), and it has a pulldown menu with the command PRINT TO VIDEO in it. Roger knows. ■


"Roger's prescription is that the newest, hottest technology is not always what will best meet specific school needs."
—Hall Davidson

HALL DAVIDSON is director of educational services at PBS station KOCE in Huntington Beach. He is the coordinator of the California Student Media Festival, a joint project of the California School Library Association (CSLA) and Computer-Using Educators (CUE), which promotes video in the curriculum and encourages entries from GATE students. Call 714-895-5623 or e-mail hall@cccd.edu.

TALKING ABOUT BOOKS

BY JODY FICKES SHAPIRO

I can't imagine a life without books. A teacher told me recently that a student had come to her class from a remote part of Mexico. He had lived on a rancho far from schools and any village life. Until he came to her school, he had never even held a book. Such a story seems hard to believe, but I did see for myself how important books are in third-world countries.

My family visited with one of our daughters who is in the Peace Corps in El Salvador. Liz is living in a small village where even paper and pencils are precious commodities. She keeps an old suitcase in her little two-room house—no bathroom, no electricity, no running water, no glass in the windows, and a leaky roof. In the suitcase are scraps of envelopes and backs of old letters. There are pencils, too. When the two children who live on her property come over to visit her, they love to take paper and pencils out of the suitcase and practice "writing" and drawing.

When we visited, we brought books. We brought books in Spanish. *Magic School Bus* and *Where's Waldo* were two of the titles in the assortment. Arriving late in the afternoon, we gave the books to the children and they immediately sat in the hammock with us so that we could read to them. Liz told them she would keep the books at her house and they would be welcome to come to read them there. The next morning the sun had barely come up before we heard whispering on the porch. It was the children. They were patiently waiting for us to get up so they could get the books. As soon as we opened the door, they scrambled in and pulled the books from the precious suitcase and handed them to us to read to them again and again.

Michael Fickes reading *El Autobus Magico* to Chando in Gavilán, El Salvador. Notice the "magic suitcase."

What if you were going to some remote place where there was limited access to books? What would you take with you? What books would you ask your parents to never give away? What books do you want to make certain that your own children will read some day?

I invite you to share your own favorite books (and stories about books) in this column. If you are like me, you can hardly imagine a life without books.

Please write to "Talking About Books," c/o Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Drive, Ventura, CA 93003, and share your thoughts about the best books in your life. ■

CALLING ALL STUDENTS!

Send your suggestions, stories, poems, art work, ideas, or other types of writings to: Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Dr., Ventura, CA 93003.

BOOK KEEPING

BY JODY FICKES SHAPIRO

Summer is a time for fun and perhaps time for just looking at the clouds passing overhead. It is also a time to read some books you didn't have time to read during the previous school year. Take the time to select a number of these books to pack away for that summer trip.

Gaining Perspectives Through History

Avi. *The Fighting Ground.*
Alder, Elizabeth. *The King's Shadow.*
Cushman, Karen. *Catherine, Called Birdy.*
Fleischman, Paul. *Bull Run.*
Freedman, Russell. *Lincoln: A Photobiography.*
McGraw, Eloise. *The Striped Ships.*
Murphy, Jim. *The Great Fire.*

Paulsen, Gary. *NightJohn.*
Salisbury, Graham. *Under the Blood-Red Sun.*
Temple, Frances. *The Ramsay Scallop.*

Moral Dilemmas and Dealing With Consequences

Avi. *Nothing But the Truth.*
Babbitt, Natalie. *Knee Knock Rise.*
Bunting, Eve. *The In-Between Days.*
Jacques, Brian. *Outcast of Redwall.*
Lowry, Lois. *The Giver.*
Meyer, Carolyn. *Where the Broken Heart Still Beats.*
Naylor, Phyllis R. *Shiloh.*
Spinelli, Jerry. *Maniac Magee.*

Finding Kindred Spirits

Boyd, Candy. *Daddy Daddy, Be There.*
Brooks, Bruce. *What Hearts.*
Byars, Betsy. *The Blossoms and the Green Phantom.*
Fenner, Carol. *Yolanda's Genius.*
George, Jean C. *My Side of the Mountain.*
George, Jean C. *Talking Earth.*
Meyer, Carolyn. *Rio Grande Stories.*
Moss, Marissa. *Amelia's Notebook.*
Wood, Nancy. *Dancing Moons.*

Developing Empathy and Understanding

Babbitt, Natalie. *Tuck Everlasting.*
Coman, Carolyn. *What Jamie Saw.*
Cushman, Karen. *The Midwife's Apprentice.*
Franklin, Kristine, ed. *Out of the Dump* (writings and photographs by children from Guatemala).
Kindersley, Barnabas. *Children Just Like Me.*
McKenzie, Ellen Kindt. *Stargone John.*
McKenzie, Ellen Kindt. *Under the Bridge.*
Magorian, Michelle. *Good Night, Mr. Tom.*
Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia.*
Sachar, Louis. *There's a Boy in the Girls' Bathroom.*
Curtis, Christopher. *The Watsons Go to Birmingham.*

Celebrate the Spirits of Curiosity and Creativity

Dresser, Norine. *I Felt Like I Was From Another Planet.*
Fanelli, Sara. *My Map Book.*
Greenwood, Barbara. *A Pioneer Sampler.*
Janeczko, Paul. *Poetry From A to Z.*
Lauber, Patricia. *Seeing Earth From Space.*
Le Tord, Bijou. *A Blue Butterfly.*
Parker, Steve. *Brain Surgery For Beginners.*

Peace Resources

Cohen, Richard. *Students Resolving Conflict.*
Fine, Esther S. *Children as Peacemakers.*
Scholes, Katherine. *Peace Begins With You.*

JODY FICKES SHAPIRO is the owner of Ventura's "Adventures for Kids," a bookstore with a national, award-winning reputation. Previously a teacher, she is the mother of gifted children.

STUDENT GRANTS

Each year the California Association for the Gifted awards grants to GATE students, K-12. The grants are awarded to support student work in an area of interest or achievement. Grants up to $500 are awarded to individuals based on the following: 1) the originality of a project that advances learning or contributes to a field of endeavor, or 2) the need to subsidize an educational opportunity not available to the student within the school district.

This year over 60 grant proposals were received from students throughout the state.

The 1996 student grant winners are:

Danielle A. Newlin, Age 10, Grade 5
Patton Elementary School
Garden Grove Unified School District
Grant for musical production.

Ryan Gipson, Age 11, Grade 6
Fairbanks School
Del Paso Heights School District
Grant for designing a rubber bottom home that will deal with flooding problems.

Nathan Ferris (grant shared with Morgan Hall), Age 16, Grade 11 and **Morgan Hall**, Age 14, Grade 12
El Dorado High School
El Dorado School District
Grant to determine the relationship between lactic acid and its effects on protein in cells.

Steven Rawnsley, Age 11, Grade 6
Patton Elementary School
Garden Grove Unified School District
Grant for advanced computer instruction.

Neal Devaraj, Age 15, Grade 10
Mira Costa High School
Manhattan Beach Unified School District
Grant for exploring DNA.

Adam Hargis-Bullen, Age 9, Grade 3
Millville Elementary School
Millville School District
Grant for developing computer graphics.

Glen Cooper, Age 17, Grade 12
Eureka High School
Eureka School District
Grant for evaluation of Elk River watershed.

A Child's Plea

Silent as the dew,
my steps tread on frozen time
The heavens align
as my soul rips apart.
Silently cursing my damnation
Yet roaring my eternal agony

I am but a child
compared to the World, the Earth
Eons has she existed
and I for only a brief moment
And she has not committed
such horrendous acts as I
For this, I envy her—her innocence

Nay, for am I not one soulless individual,
but a Speaker for many
The presenter and acceptor
of all Sins and Crimes
I ask forgiveness for the havoc
I have caused
Violence, Blindness, Ignorance—
Please forgive all,
For I am still learning my place in the entirety

O wondrous eternity!
I suffer—oh, how I suffer!
I cannot forgive myself these acts,
I cannot condone what I have committed
What good would it do?
What was done cannot be taken back
I have only myself
to accept the shameful blame

Forgive me the strife
and the bloodshed
Forgive the mutilation
and the ignorance
I was young then
as I am now
Forgive me my humanity

—Kristen Judy
Grade 12, Ventura High School, Ventura
Honorable Mention
Barnes and Noble Young Poets Contest

GATE-ing to Know Me

BY SHERRY SIDESINGER, GATE teacher, Hueneme School District

Have you ever written in a journal or a diary? You may have used homemade journals constructed with string and paper or you may have purchased a fancy leather-bound diary with a lock and key. Most people have tried to write in a journal, at least for a period of time. Some famous people in history have kept journals and we have learned about their lives and times through their own words. Pioneer women poured out their joys and sorrows in their diaries as they journeyed West. Anne Frank helped us understand World War II from a young person's point of view through her diary. More recently in her published diary, Zlata Filipovic shared her life in war-torn Sarajevo.

This summer might be a perfect time to create a journal that you could reflect upon in years to come. Choose some special paper and get ready to find out about YOU.

1

Fold four pieces of 8"x10" paper in half and fasten the pages together with string or staples. (You may decide to make yours a different size and length if you choose.)

2

Make the first page a cover page. My journal looks like this.

GATE-ing
to Know
ME

An
Autobiographical Journal
By

_____

Be creative! You may make the title whatever you choose. You might also like to add some art to the cover.

3

Open your journal and start on the left side of the paper. You might start with some personal information. I decided to include some...

Statistical Data

Full name _____
Date of birth _____
Place of birth _____
Color of hair _____ Color of eyes _____
Height _____ Weight _____
Home address _____
My family members include:
Parents _____
Brothers and sisters _____
Grandparents _____
Aunts and uncles _____
Cousins _____
Pets _____

Add other information you might include.

4

On the next page, I included the following things:

Personal Favorites

Color(s) _____
Subject(s) in school _____
Author(s) _____
Book(s) _____
Hobby(ies) _____
Career(s) _____

Music/song(s) _____
Television show(s) _____
Holiday(s) _____
Friend(s) _____

5

We all can imagine a "perfect day." On another page write about what you imagine to be your perfect day. Use this set-up if you like.

The Perfect Day

Today is a holiday honoring YOU!
Take us along as you do all of your favorite activities.

Morning

Afternoon

Evening

6

On another page you can enjoy reliving a week in your life. Here's one format you might like to follow.

Dear Diary

Keep a brief 5-day record of your daily activities. You may be surprised at how busy you are!

Day 1

Day 2

Day 3

Day 4

Day 5

7

Ask someone in your family for a favorite recipe. Copy it onto a journal page. Include a picture of your special dish, if you like.

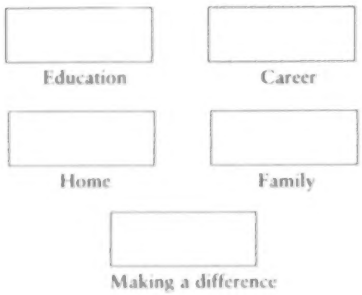
Create a recipe on the next page that has the ingredients that make up YOU.

8

Choose another page to write about how you imagine yourself in the future.

Personal Goals

Make pictographs to show five of your future goals.



9

Try to show yourself by writing a poem on another page.

I Am Poetry

Make a "name poem" to tell more about you.
Here's an example:
Damaged his arm in the baseball game
And was a good friend of Gary's
Never got to lunch on time

10

Leonardo da Vinci was not only an artist but also an inventor. He wrote in a journal that could only be read by placing a mirror up to the writing. In his journal he also drew things that he imagined and many of them, like the helicopter, were invented hundreds of years later. On this page in your journal, imagine something that you would like to invent and draw it. Then write a description of how it might work. Try writing it like Leonardo and then hold it up to a mirror and see how it works.

11

Albert Einstein, a famous scientist and mathematician, also kept a journal. Create an adventure story. At the end, your main character must solve a problem that uses mathematical skills. Perhaps you could create a story that involves space travel or underwater travel. Have someone read your story and try to solve the problem.

12

You might decide to use two facing pages to reflect on a character in a story.

A Special Friend

Think of one of the most fascinating characters you've read about. Imagine having that character as a friend.

Describe the character and her/his qualities that would make you want to be friends.

Name of character _____

Story/book _____

The character _____ is someone I think would be a good friend because _____

_____

_____

_____

Describe ways in which you are like this character.

_____

_____

_____

Tell what you might do together as friends.

13

On the back page it would be interesting to list some things you would like to learn more about or list some goals you would like to reach in your life.

Example:

I would like to see the Egyptian pyramids.

I would like to swim in the Amazon River

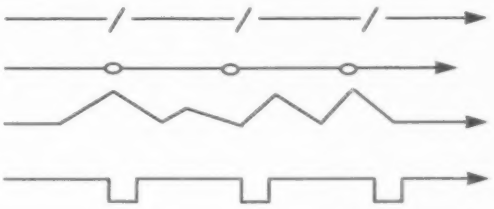
I would like to go on a camping trip in the Sierras.

I'd like to learn to read hieroglyphics.

I'd like to learn how to train llamas as pack animals.

I Need to Think About it—Pondering

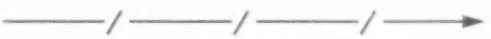
BY SANDRA KAPLAN



These are patterns to represent how people think. Think about which of these patterns best represents how you think when you are asked to solve a math problem. Think about which of these patterns best represents how you think when you are choosing what to wear to school. Think about which of these patterns best represents how you think when you are reading a book. Why do you think differently in different situations?

Each pattern of thinking shares a common feature. It is the need to pause, wait, deliberate, or consider: we call this pondering or the time we spend during the thinking process to incubate or let the things we think about take shape or become more clear.

Sometimes pondering is time out from thinking to stare into space...



or do something else while our thoughts incubate.

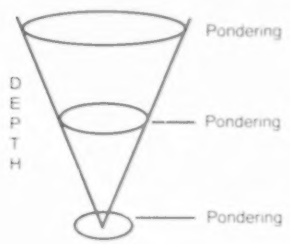
Sometimes pondering is exciting and feels like a roller-coaster ride.

Sometimes pondering is restful.

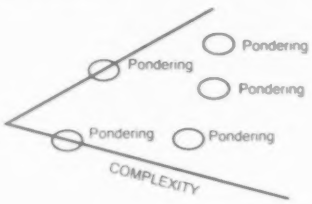
The reason for thinking about something, and the context or setting in which we are thinking often determine our pattern for thinking. There are many tools or skills for thinking, and habits and attitudes that accompany and affect our thinking.

The tools and skills for thinking are sometimes simple like comparing or sequencing. Some tools are more difficult like judging or noting ambiguity. How you approach thinking has a relationship to the quality of your thinking process. For example, the "I can't" attitude affects your thinking differently than the "I can" philosophy or belief.

The DEPTH and COMPLEXITY required for thinking changes how we ponder. When we are asked to study or consider something in DEPTH, our pondering is focused. It might look like this:



When we are asked to think with COMPLEXITY, our pondering is more diffused or general. We focus simultaneously on several related things. It might look like this.



It takes time to think about solutions to problems and decisions to make. Pondering is important because it gives us time to define solutions and make decisions or judgments. Your pondering may appear to others as if you are daydreaming, wasting time, or ignoring the task. While it may not appear to others that you are engaged actively in the thinking process, you may be pondering or taking the time to "mull it over" or incubate your thoughts before your ideas are formalized and finalized.

We can study our own patterns of thoughts, which is called metacognition, to learn more about the value of pondering. We also can study the great thinkers to learn about the role of pondering in the thinking process. Select a biography or autobiography of a great thinker and examine the pattern of thinking used to create an idea. Use the following workpage to explore how ideas originate, how they are valued, and why they are significant. You may wish to ponder as you complete the workpage!

SANDRA KAPLAN, Ed.D is Clinical Professor, School of Education, University of Southern California.

Thinking About Thinkers: A Thinkingsheet

Select a thinker. Complete the thinkingsheet by describing the thinker's thinking.
The thinker is _____.

How did the thinker give birth to ideas?	
How did the thinker gain acceptance of the idea(s)?	
What was the significance or value of the idea?	
What contributions have resulted from the idea?	

La Casa con Alfombra Azul

Mamacita, baggin' groceries at the Shop n' Go.
Her ten strong fingers slicin' through those bags,
keepin' the line movin'
My Mamacita is very strong.

Papa? Papa is in Reno—or at least that's where his latest postcard came from.
Papa says we're gonna be rich,
just gotta wait for his lucky streak.

Mamacita, tired and hungry,
comes home with our monthly groceries.
Holdin' down four jobs a week,
Mamacita is exhausted.
"Brought you a little treat, gordita," Mamacita says
with a smile, too weak to rise.

Mamacita has brought home cookies,
one of them for me and one for Fernando.
Mmmmmmmmmm.
Mamacita's paycheck must have been good this week.
I lay down, chewin' my cookie.

One day,
when I'm a famous dancer,
my name will be known all around the world.
Teresita...Elena...Lupe

I'll buy Mamacita a new pair of sneakers,
Her's are all worn out,
with duct tape laces.

Little Fernando'll get a soccer ball,
He practices with my old teddy bear's head.
He's good, very good.

And Papa?
Papa'll get a brand new suit!
This way he can go look for a job and look more "decent."
But, best of all,
I'm gonna buy us a house.
With white curtains and blue carpets.

No more cold wooden floors.
Real carpet which will cushion Mamacita's calluses.
A yard with a swing set.
And a kitchen with a stove.
Papa can prepare his famous plantanos.
And I will make the main course.

Laura Magid, age 14
Grade 8, Saklan Valley School
Moraga
Kimberly Strain, teacher

Just a Teacher

BY ANGEL BARRETT

I knew I wanted to be a teacher when I was in elementary school.

"Just a teacher!" my high school counselor scoffed at me. "Is that all you want to be?"

I knew I wanted to be a teacher when I was in elementary school. After all, I had been training for years. As a gifted student, once I finished my work, my assignment was to help the other children complete theirs. I also volunteered in children's centers and led church activities.

To me, teaching was my natural vocation.

But I followed my high school counselor's advice and planned a premed curriculum. I was the only premed student whose transcript included children's literature and student teaching. My college counselor thought it was a good idea that I had "something to fall back on" in case I didn't get into medical school.

I was preparing to enter medical school in September when I moved to California and began studying for my teaching credential at UCLA. My friends thought it was "such a shame that Angel couldn't cut it" and "such a waste. Guess she's not as smart as everyone thought."

The only time I have second thoughts is when I compare the pay scales or watch *ER*.

During the March CAG conference, I was the tour guide at Euclid Gifted/High Ability Bilingual Magnet where I had taught for years. While visiting a fifth-grade class, one of my former preschool students pulled out her class picture. She had carried that photo in her notebook for five years. I left the room in tears.

Three years ago, I took my first out-of-the-classroom position. Currently, I am an advisor, private consultant, university instructor, and author. But first and foremost, I am and always will be "just a teacher." I carry that honor wherever I go.

I still design curriculum and do demonstration lessons. My home office is overflowing with poster board, markers, and research materials. I recently went to the 99-cent store and bought one of all the calendars for my picture files.

...And every once in a while, my colleagues see me staring out the window and remembering... my classroom, my students...my school. Just a teacher? YOU BET! ■

ANGEL BARRETT is the Magnet Advisor for the Los Angeles Unified School District.

Do you have a "just a teacher" story that you would like to share? We would like to publish some of those stories. Send your manuscripts to Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Dr., Ventura, CA 93003.

I Wonder Why

I am human
I wonder why
I hear the beating of the drums
I see the outstretched hands
I want to join, and be one of them
I am a member of the human race

I am a tiny speck in the universe
I wonder how
I hear echoes in emptiness
I see a thousand other specks like me
I want to join, and be one with them
I am the universe

I pretend you are me and I am you
I feel your pain and my joy
I touch the glass between me and my life
I worry that I am not who I think I am
I cry when I feel alone
I am human

I understand we are bound together
I say a spirit is more than a body can hold
I dream of love everlasting
I try to give back what I have been given
I hope you understand
I am the universe

—Megan Brewer, age 13
Grade 7, Ladera Vista Jr. High
Fullerton
Donna Judd, teacher

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CAG REFLECTIONS

Continued from 1

College with about 75 people in attendance. In 1963, the group officially became the California Association for the Gifted and named Martinson as president.

Next year, we'll be celebrating CAG's 35th annual conference with an expected attendance of over 2,000. We've come a long way since that first gathering of 75 people. Revisit the journey with us.

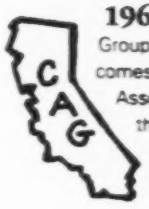
JUDY ROSEBERRY is the current CAG treasurer and a long-time member of CAG. She is principal of Stanley Elementary School in Garden Grove and was recently named Principal of the Year by the Association of California School Administrators.

1961-1962

First California legislation passes authorizing the gifted program.

Spring 1963

First annual conference is held at Long Beach State College with about 75 people attending.

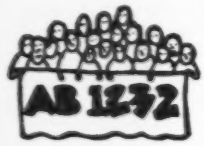


1963

Group officially becomes the California Association for the Gifted and named Ruth Martinson as president.

1982

CAG rallies behind AB 1232.



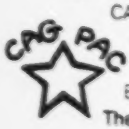
1979

AB 1040 replaces the Mentally Gifted Minor Program bill. CAG drafts much of the language for the bill under Assemblyman Dennis Mangers' leadership. AB 1040 broadens the program to include gifted and talented students and allows districts to use multiple identification criteria. The bill changes the entire funding structure for the GATE program and eliminates the use of GATE money for field trips unless authorized by the State Superintendent.

1983

The first State Parent Council scholarships for parents are awarded.

1983



CAG PAC is organized in November under the leadership of Betty Ann Tetzke. The original CAG PAC members are Allyn Arnold, Lorraine Bostick, Jeanne Delp, David Hermanson, Carolyn Lee, Kenneth Schotz, and Janet Ward.

1984

The May Seagoe Scholarship begins. Grants are given to individuals pursuing research or graduate studies in the area of the gifted.

1987

Federal legislation, the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, passes.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

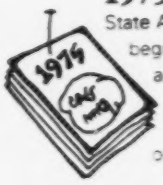
1964
CAG bylaws are developed.

1966
Jeanne Delp is the first president elected under the new bylaws.

1973
CAG begins the scholarship program for teachers, administrators, parents, college, and university students.

1974
Jacob Javits introduces Federal legislation.

1975
State Advisory Committee begins to meet monthly and receive updates from the California State Department of Education.



1978
State Parent Council is formed under the leadership of Ruth Fenton. Each parent representative acts not only as a contact in his or her home region, but also as a resource on advocacy matters.

1978
CAG provides the first student conference in conjunction with the annual CAG conference.

1987
February 24, GATE day in Sacramento, is organized to protest Governor Deukmejian's proposal to eliminate the GATE program. Students, parents, and educators gather on the steps of the Capitol to point out the need for special programs for the gifted. Funds are restored.

1990
CAG sponsors the "At Risk Conference" on October 27. The conference provides an opportunity for parents and educators to better understand the social and emotional factors of giftedness.

1996
The annual CAG conference has over 2,000 attendees. Thousands of educators and parents, not only from the United States but also Mexico, Russia, Peru, Germany, Argentina, and the Philippines, constitute the membership of CAG.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Gifted and Talented

continued from 1

able to broaden their definitions of giftedness and improve or expand services to these unique pupils.

CURRENT PROGRAM

The purpose of the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program is to provide challenging curriculum and instruction for gifted and talented pupils who are capable of achieving significantly beyond the level of their peers.

In many cases, even a good, quality educational program is not sufficiently challenging for a student with special gifts or talents, and GATE funding is used to design and deliver a supplemental and differentiated educational program for individuals or groups of students with special needs. More specifically, GATE funding is used for costs associated with identifying pupils and establishment of differentiated instruction offered in special classes, special schools, extended day programs, or within the regular classroom.

Individual program planning, as well as special competitions, such as the Academic Decathlon, Science Bowl, and Odyssey of the Mind, are supported in part by GATE funding.

Staff development activities designed to improve the quality of instruction are frequently funded with GATE funds. While some training programs (e.g., Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate) are content and course specific, often the teacher working with GATE students in a regular classroom is trained in more general instructional techniques designed to improve the quality of teaching for gifted and talented students.

By stimulating the gifted students and by showing how all students can learn when given the opportunity, GATE funding is truly a catalyst for improving educational programs for all.

POTENTIAL FUNDING INCREASE

Of the almost $15 billion in the 1994-95 California education budget, $31,539,268, or .1 of one percent of the total budget funds (both federal and state), was set aside for GATE funding.

Staff development is a vital component of GATE programs. Diane Corbin, first-grade bilingual teacher at Valerio Elementary in Los Angeles, provides a hands-on science workshop to teachers as part of the Creativity Pilot Program.

By the numbers...

...In 1961, the California Legislature established the mentally gifted minors (MGM) program for students scoring in the 98th percentile or above on a standardized intellectual abilities test.

...In 1980, AB 1040 established the GATE program, allowed districts to set their own criteria for qualifying for the program, and permitted the expansion of services beyond the intellectually gifted to include students who were gifted and/or talented in a number of areas such as specific academic ability, leadership, performing and visual arts, and creativity.

...725 districts in 58 counties currently have a GATE program. In 1980, 454 school districts and 160,000 students were participating in a GATE program.

...For the 1994-95 school year, over 320,900 or approximately 6% of public school students were identified as gifted and talented.

...The ethnic breakdown for identified students in 1994–1995 was: 11.1% of all Asians, 8.6% of all Whites, 8.1% of all Filipinos, 6.3% of all Pacific Islanders, 4.2% of all Native Americans, 3.3% of all African-Americans, and 2.6% of all Hispanics.

In a nutshell

GATE programs are NOT mandated in the State of California. Districts may elect whether or not to apply for GATE funding. Their applications may be approved by the State Board of Education for one, two, or three years.

In order to qualify for funding, districts must:

- identify gifted and talented students, and
- certify on the J-22 form that pupils are served each semester for a minimum of 15 weeks.

State law requires that these districts differentiate instruction for gifted and talented pupils an average of 200 minutes each week, except in school-based coordinated programs.

GATE funding is allocated according to a formula. Medium- and large-size districts received approximately $6.50 per student in 1995-96. These figures were based on the average daily attendance (ADA) for the 1994-95 school year. Small districts that served fewer than a total of 51 gifted and talented were allocated approximately $250 per student.

In recognition of the direct relationship between GATE programs and improved student achievement, both the State Board of Education and State Superintendent Delaine Eastin have asked each state legislator to increase the amount of GATE funding available in California for the 1996-97 school year. An increase of $23 million would bring the state GATE funding to $54.5 million or about one percent of total state categorical funding. This request will be discussed during state budget hearings in May and June. ■

CATHERINE BARKETT is the Coordinator for Gifted and Talented Education for the California Department of Education.

CAG asks you to make a difference...

For more information about how you can contact your local legislator and encourage him or her to support this requested funding increase, CAG urges you to contact your regional CAG representative today.

Technology

Reflections of a Sixth-Grade Teacher

BY GINGER BRITT

I know exactly how it began, the fascination with things technological. It started ten years ago with a craving for an overhead projector so I could explore students' writing in a collaborative setting. It became more insistent when I felt compelled to write a grant for an Apple IIe computer so that I could find out what my students were doing when they went to computer class in the library. The AB803 grant awarded to my school made me teacher-director of a long-standing technology project and I was soon responsible for a lot of equipment. Curiosity carried me through a variety of Macintosh computers, various CD players, a laserdisc player, a fax machine, still image and video cameras, video recorders, television monitors, an in-house video broadcasting network, and, the newest link, e-mail and the Internet. Although all of them now have a place in my classroom program, for awhile, each of them became the one thing without which I absolutely could not teach. Today, it is e-mail and classroom access to the Internet.

How does all this happen to a bibliophile—a book-lover first and foremost? How could I become so dependent on this equipment? How did I acquire the conviction that my students must have these experiences if they are to be able to compete equally as adults? The truth is that it could not have happened otherwise. I watched the students at work. I watched my colleagues at work. I watched myself at work. All of us were accomplishing more, and accomplishing it more quickly and effectively, with the use of equipment of fast-growing technologies. By no means have I given up my beloved books and extensive writing experiences for myself or for my students. Instead, the technologies enrich these experiences in a multitude of ways. I believe that I teach better and my students learn better because we have access to the emerging technologies.

"How does all this happen to a bibliophile—a book lover first and foremost? How could I become so dependent on this equipment?"

The biggest problem for me has been the cables. Providing electrical power is a serious problem because of limited outlets. My room often looks much like an out-of-control spider web with cables of all kinds strung high and low, crossing and re-crossing each other. Two Macintosh computers are cabled to the school-wide network, sharing laser printers, and bringing e-mail and the Internet to my students in the classroom. Six additional computers with several CD players, three printers, a laserdisc player, a television monitor, VCR, and broadcasting equipment compete for space with a video camera, a still image camera, an audio CD player, several tape recorders, other supporting equipment, and 34 students in aged universal desks.

Technology set up in a 30-year-old school means that the visit of the Fire Marshall is accompanied by our fervent hope that we haven't added the new piece of equipment in a connection that he will deem unsafe.

My desk is always heaped high with papers and materials of all kinds. The time I used to spend organizing is now spent in keeping things running. I am never caught up with the scoring of papers for my sixth-grade students. Instead, I spend hours previewing software and video, and looking for the perfect resources to bring ancient history alive, to make genetics understandable, to view the literature from another perspective. And then, things go wrong! Equipment is disconnected and has to be more reprogrammed. A cable dies. A battery wears out. I forget how it (whatever it is) works! And still, the first thing I do in the morning is check the e-mail to see what new and exciting messages await.

E-mail and Internet access are truly revolutionary. This spring, our sixth-grade students tried to squeeze in *MayaQuest* '96, an Internet field trip where students learn about the Mayan culture. We were excited by the idea of traveling in real time with an archaeological team through the updates, photos, and journal entries received from the *MayaQuest* team via the World Wide Web and e-mail. We wanted to join in the research and decision making, but we couldn't squeeze enough time this year from the already packed curriculum. The best we could do was shake our heads at the hard lives of the children as we read their profiles and compared them with the photos on the screen. We shivered at the snakes met and at the food eaten by the traveling team. We could only guess at the weekly question and mystery photo because we had no time for research. Next year, we will write this adventure and the student activities into our yearly plans so that we can participate fully.

My students have created *HyperStudio* stacks for Greek mythology. They sent research questions around the world via KidLink and the Internet. They offered e-mail responses to Santa Claus letters from younger students. They saw the first Hubble shots, the entry to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, and Greek sculpture in museums and in Athens before they visited the Getty Museum in Malibu. My students have corresponded electronically with pen pals thousands of miles away. Often the diversity in my classroom contrasts starkly with the homogeneity of their pen-pal partners' classes.

We present live teleconferences and public interest broadcasts throughout our school using our in-house video network. This spring my class began a weekly school news broadcast, gathering and presenting school news of importance in a limited amount of time. Scheduling interviews, tracking down accurate information, meeting deadlines, and producing a product valued by others develop marketable skills that will be invaluable in both the academic and work worlds. Students learned a lesson that might be useful to some professionals when their e-mail returned several complaints of inaccuracy after an early broadcast. Making a public apology and presenting a rebroadcast underscored for these broadcasters the values inherent in the ethics of media journalism.

We publish incessantly, explore mathematics through *LOGO* (a computer program), simulate experiences on the computer, and provide common historical and scientific data using video. We do science with TEAMS (a distance-learning program from Los Angeles County Office of Education) in which a video teacher presents and performs tests that require complex or dangerous equipment and materials. Classroom teachers work with the video to set up and monitor hands-on explorations by their students. Students use the fax machine, telephone, and e-mail to share data they collect and ideas about process and what it may all mean.

We use our video network for the preparation for the sixth-grade Science Fair Juries. A single student team demonstrates the procedure for presentations and discussion. Students in all sixth-grade classrooms practice discussion and making judgments under the direction of the classroom teacher. Common understandings and preparations from the broadcast make the afternoon jury sessions work smoothly and effectively.

And, believe it or not, we read more and probably better, we write more and definitely better, and we have multiplied both our information resources and ways to present and share information many times over. I have thought about the concerns of the anti-technology folks. I really don't see how technology could replace me in my lifetime. I don't think it will replace the book for pleasure reading. However, *look out textbook publishers* when teachers realize that they can 'publish' on the computer the exact up-to-date information they want for their students, calling up words and pictures on the video screen. Why pay $30 plus for a textbook that is already outdated and not precisely focused to your curriculum if you can select precise text updated the day before? Another

thing is in the process of being revolutionized: the field trip. Not only can we travel to distant places at the touch of a key and for pennies, but we can travel in real-time in interactive settings

As for me and my students, our computers, CD players, and video are the normal stuff of our workday, lending ease, speed, and resources that make our work more efficient and effective. We go to the computer daily to keep records, to find information, to search the World Wide Web for a range of reasons, to join in with other students in exploration and communication, and to write in draft, revised, and final forms. We add video and other images to our work. We watch *CNN Student Newsroom* each day, and we broadcast regularly. We stay in touch with the world with video, the Web, and e-mail. We succeed and we fail. And we continue the struggle to maintain contact with the ever-evolving technologies. It remains a roller-coaster ride with some real highs and the occasional low. It's exciting. It's sometimes exhausting. It's always enriching. We wouldn't want it any other way! ■

GINGER BRITT teaches sixth-grade GATE at Laguna Road School in Fullerton, CA. She was coordinator of Project Links, a state-level two-model technology program for language arts.

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM CAG

"If you teach gifted students, this guidebook is a must!"

Meeting the Challenge

A Guidebook for Teaching Gifted Students

Just look at what you'll find...

- answers to your most-asked questions about gifted education
- lists of available resources, including CAG services, education code regulations, associations, and journals in the field
- an easy-to-use annotated bibliography arranged by topic
- CAG's new, revised comprehensive glossary of educational terms showing how they relate to gifted education.

CAG Position Statements: A Glossary

(available in English and Spanish)

This handy reference for parents and teachers defines terms used to describe general and gifted education. It also delineates CAG's position with respect to the issues, concerns and considerations of the terms and how they relate specifically to gifted students and gifted education.

Call the CAG office at 415-965-0653 for ordering information.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The Great Influence

Sit.
So tell me,
How's it been?
Life in a cruel world.

What could I say?
To confuse what you've refused.
Stand tall,
Don't be afraid.
Are you blinded by excitement?
Or just too ignorant to admit it.

I've been there, I know,
How the Great Influence works its way.
Resist!
Don't let up!
It's only a trick.
But who am I to tell you,
Right.

There it is again,
Eating at your mind.
Trust,
Is the way.
The way to break free,
From the wrath of Life.

Of course there are those,
Who talk of greatness.
Oh, yes!
They have been there,
But so have you.
Surely there have been times,
In pain and in glory.

But mind you,
All who have been there,
Know and respect the Influence,
And all those it uses.
For the Influence is all powerful,
And can't be fought alone.

I have not yet found the way.
I lack the will,
The Influence leads you to
Nothing.
But I shall endure
And so will you.
Once we learn to dig within ourselves,
Let the knowledge pass,
We will live at peace.

—Justin Salerno, age 14
Grade 8, DeAnza Middle School Ventura
Mrs. Linda Brug, teacher

MULTIMEDIA REFLECTIONS

The following articles are teacher reflections about the experience of participating in the Pioneer Multimedia Room at the March 1996 CAG Conference.

Kids Teach Teachers About Multimedia

BY HATTIE BERESFORD

When Genny Buford and Shannon Moon (two eighth-grade students in my GATE English/ history Core at La Cumbre Middle School in Santa Barbara) volunteered to be part of a multimedia project, they had no idea what they were in for. Neither did their teacher.

Four months and 300 hours later, Shannon and Genny presented their completed project, *Vietnam and the Civil War: A Comparison*, to over 500 teachers at the CAG Conference in March 1996.

Genny and Shannon were one of nine teams from Southern California schools chosen to develop a project which incorporated multimedia technology. The project was jointly sponsored by CAG, Pioneer New Media Technologies, and *HyperStudio*. The Santa Barbara district GATE program also generously donated funds to pay for our transportation, lodging, and meals. District funds purchased a scanner to help us import images into our presentation. (We're very lucky in Santa Barbara! "Friends of GATE" and our District GATE Advisory Council hold a fund-raiser each year to raise money for our program.)

Instead of a traditional pencil and paper presentation of their research and thinking on the subjects of Vietnam and the Civil War, Genny and Shannon used a special computer program, *HyperStudio*, to create a dynamic presentation that incorporated special audiovisual effects.

Shannon's favorite task in creating the presentation was making "buttons" that move the viewer from one part of the project to another. Click on a button with the mouse and the screen fades to black and a new image appears. Magic! Genny became quite adept at designing borders with just the right colors.

We were the only group presenting at the conference who had used a PC version of *HyperStudio* to create the presentation. The PC version wasn't as capable as the Macintosh version, but as we learned what it *was* capable of doing, we became more efficient. The final project lacked some of the dynamics of the Mac projects because we couldn't access movies—only stills from the laser discs. Nevertheless, the students created an outstanding presentation using the buttons, borders, timers, and color and paint tools.

I learned a lot about the process as well; it would never take another 300 hours to create this type of presentation. The research, of course, was time consuming and we tried to cover too much. I thought I'd been really slick when I convinced the students that a comparison of all wars was too broad and would require an overwhelming job of research. Fifty pages later we were still too broad with our topic.

When I do this project again, I will insist that the text of the project—whether it is research or a story or whatever—be no longer than two to three double-spaced typed pages. A page limit will help students narrow their topic and project. A floppy disk can only store about 1.4 megabytes of data, and these two to three typewritten pages will divide into about six to nine pages (cards) in a *HyperStudio* stack. The rest of the project can then be graphic representations or animation that illustrates the project in some creative way.

Genny and Shannon demonstrated their project to the class and there are now 30 other students who are waiting for me to catch my breath so they can get their hands on the equipment. Since we only have one computer with *HyperStudio* on it, I plan to use an "each one teach one" approach to the intricacies (which the kids pick up faster than I) of the *HyperStudio* program. Genny and Shannon will teach the next group of two, then that group will teach another and so on.

But, quite frankly, they'll just have to get in line. Right now, I'm playing with it! My students just finished creating "Utopian Societies," and I'm saving examples of their projects by using the scanner to scan their writing and drawings into the computer. A great tool, the scanner. It looks and works like a Xerox machine, only instead of a piece of paper coming out the other end, the image shows up on the computer screen where you can crop and size it and then save and use it with *HyperStudio*. More magic!

Next year, before the Utopia assignment, I'll bring in the com-

puter which is attached to a TV monitor and show examples to the next class, and finally I'll get some of my closet space back. The more I use this multimedia program, the more I see its potential as a teaching tool as well.

A multimedia program is not a substitute for student thinking and creativity and especially not for hard-core research. It is, however, an exciting presentation format that allows for student creativity in the presentation. Also, Genny and Shannon made surprising insights into their project by presenting it in this manner. They shared these insights and their project in a special session at the CAG conference and in the multimedia room.

Students demonstrate their project in the CAG/Pioneer Multimedia Room.

Genny and Shannon instructed hundreds of teachers on the use of multimedia in the classroom. They calmed the nerves of the timid, computer-phobic teachers and responded to occasional grilling with equal aplomb. They answered thousands of questions with expertise. I generally stood back and watched them with some amazement.

Although they worked a full day and a half in the multimedia room that weekend in March, Shannon and Genny did not forget their friends. (They are, after all, 13-year-olds.) Tucked in their suitcases for the return trip to Santa Barbara were the requested shampoos, soaps, and shower caps with the Hilton logo. Needless to say, the girls slept soundly on the long drive home and thoughts of multimedia were, for the moment, forgotten.

HATTIE BERESFORD teaches GATE at La Cumbre Middle School in Santa Barbara, CA.

Electronic Research Report "Architecture of the Ancient World"

BY LORETTA CLARK

Sixth-grade GATE students at Taft Elementary School in Orange participated in the CAG/Pioneer multimedia project by putting together their first "electronic paper" to demonstrate their understanding of architecture in the ancient world. This project replaced the traditional research report which typically culminates a unit of study and is an integral part of the sixth-grade core social studies curriculum on ancient civilizations.

Classroom Organization

Two students were selected for a technology team based on several criteria including computer skills, leadership ability, organizational skills, and dependability. These students attended the CAG/Pioneer project orientation where they received training in the use of *HyperStudio* and selected their project topic "Architecture in the Ancient World."

The students in the sixth-grade class then formed seven collaborative groups and selected ancient civilizations they would like to study. These cultures included: Mayan, Egyptian, Greek, Japanese, Chinese, and Roman. Eventually the students extended their study of ancient Roman architecture to include Italian architecture of a later period.

Study Topics

After a collaborative group study of the cultural universals of their selected culture, the students were given the following tasks: (1) review the architecture of the assigned culture and select three structures for in-depth study, and (2) design a building which reflects the architectural style of the culture being studied.

Each collaborative group selected a chairperson who made specific assignments and monitored the progress of the group. During the study phase students used a laser disc, "Art of the Western World," and video clips from the "Second Voyage of the Mimi." They also scanned pictures from books, encyclopedias, and magazines. They also went online to find even more information.

The student chairpersons met with the technology team to create *HyperStudio* stacks. Time limitations did not allow us to train all chairpersons on the use of *HyperStudio* to meet this objective. We did find that the chairpersons trained on *HyperStudio* were able to be more involved in the creation of the program. In the future, all students will be trained on *HyperStudio* before they attempt electronic research reports.

In the beginning, students on the technology team and the chairpersons created their own

systems for planning. Later, they used the storyboard function on *HyperStudio* for the planning and refinement of their stacks. Students used some organizational ideas from *Help! I Have HyperStudio Now What Do I Do*, by Karen Hein McBride and Elizabeth DeBoer Luntz.

Technical Difficulties or How to Solve Problems Without an Answer Key

Technical problems did surface from time to time. We developed a support network in order to solve these problems. Our first step was to consult a teacher at Taft who had more computer knowledge than we did. Next, we contacted parents with extensive computer experience. If we still needed more help, we contacted technicians at Pioneer Electronics. Later, we memorized the technical support numbers for *HyperStudio* and Apple. These problem-solving experiences taught us the necessity of having a telephone near the computer. Students learned to be very specific in describing the types of problems they were experiencing. The importance of observation, precise communication, and following directions became apparent to students as they worked with technicians.

Modifications

Although we had started with a technology team of two students, we had expanded the technology team to three students by our second meeting with Pioneer in January. This became necessary because of our departmentalized structure. The sixth graders only had access to the computer during social studies, a 45-minute daily period. Although this provided sufficient time for the collaborative groups to accomplish their objectives, it became very difficult for the technology team and chairpersons to meet their objectives. As the deadline for project completion approached, the technology team found it necessary to work during free periods, recess, and lunch. This would not be a problem, however, for a regular classroom presentation because the timeline could be altered as necessary.

Differentiation

Our year-long theme of change focused on two pervasive themes: (1) Although change occurs over time, similar architectural motifs may be found throughout many different societies; and (2) architectural styles of modern society are influenced by the architectural styles of previous civilizations. The project also led the students to in-depth exploration of computer/technology terms, and architectural details and patterns. Students engaged in lively discussions regarding ethical issues of labor exploitation and uses of the edifices such as the Coliseum. Students also investigated the relationship of the assigned culture to its architecture, architectural styles spanning long periods of time, and became aware of the connection between architecture, mathematics, science, and art. They also had the opportunity to create drawings reflecting their own interpretation of ancient architectural styles.

Conclusion

The electronic research report provides gifted students excellent opportunities to access and communicate information and ideas in interesting and powerful ways. The experiences that lead to the final product involved real-life problem solving, time management, and learning effective collaborative strategies.

LORETTA CLARK is a teacher at Taft Elementary School in Orange, CA.

Truth

Truth, his exact age unknown, died yesterday after being strangled by Deception. He had lived in the town of Salem for as long as anyone can remember. Friends recall that he had tried his hand at being a used-car salesman and an attorney, but had failed. He is best known for being a member of the classic rock group, The Seven Virtues. Truth is survived by his two sisters, Honesty and Verity, who, because of threats on their lives, have entered the Federal Witness Protection Program. He is also survived by his nephew, Little White Lies, who has long been shunned by the family because of his involvement in the Pinocchio incident. Services will be held at the County Courthouse at 1:00 on Sunday. Mourners will be sworn in at the door. Perjurers and prevaricators will not be admitted. The family has requested that in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the fund for the Preservation of Truth, Justice, and the American Way (POTJAW).

—Alison Girod, age 14
Grade 8, Las Colinas Middle School
Camarillo
Mrs. Skip Harrington, teacher

Pioneer/CAG Multimedia Project at Oaks Hills Elementary School

BY BECKY KOCH

As we sat in the computer lab at Pepperdine University experiencing a dynamic presentation of *HyperStudio* led by experts from Pioneer Electronics, we were filled with feelings of both excitement and apprehension. Would we ever be able to complete a project anything like these that we were watching? Could we possibly find our way through this multimedia maze? How much work would I end up doing to ensure the success of our project? Before the day was over, my students were fearlessly creating a high-tech, multimedia presentation.

At Oak Hills Elementary, we are fortunate to have Pioneer laser disc players in each room. However, most of us continue to use what we are familiar with—the VCR—while the laser disc players gather dust. *HyperStudio* has opened a new door and now students enjoy using the laser disc players, along with the Macintosh computer, to create research projects on their own.

Our greatest challenge for the project was getting our equipment all together and everything up and running. Once all cables were in place and everything was loaded onto the computer, we were on our way. To my delight, the program was truly fun and easy. With *HyperStudio*, kids are able to create with ease projects that appear technically difficult. When we did bump into a problem, help was a phone call away.

Teachers have asked how research skills and the writing process are involved when students create multimedia projects on the computer. I found that in order to create a successful project students needed solid research skills and had to follow through all of the steps of the formal writing process. Once our topic was selected, and research complete, the students created an outline or flowchart of their project. Notes taken during the research process (using sources ranging from encyclopedias to the Internet) were then used to write text and draft a bibliography. We discovered that editing was significantly easier using a hard copy of the text. All written text was printed, proofread, and edited several times until it was just right.

While watching Brenton and Linnet present their project at the CAG Conference in March with such confidence and pride, the value of student-related multimedia projects was impossible to miss. These kids still continue to enjoy working on extra projects during their own free time. What a joy it is to watch students research and design projects with such endless enthusiasm.

I found that providing time for students to explore and play with the program is very valuable to the success of their projects. It allows them to focus on the content of their project, rather than on the "how-to's" of the program, when a formal assignment is given.

The next challenge we faced was how to disseminate all of our newfound knowledge throughout the school. We discovered what we believe to be a great solution. The students who participated in the project with CAG are now our "Multimedia Student Mentors." These students will share what they have learned with other GATE students at our site. These new student experts will then teach other students in their regular classroom. Once students are comfortable with the program, upper graders will work on fun mini-projects with their "Little Buddies" in the primary grades. We are in the beginning stages of this process and aren't quite sure how long this will take, but students and teachers alike are very excited.

I encourage teachers to take advantage of any training or special programs offered on this topic and learn how to incorporate multimedia technology into your classroom. Once I set aside my insecurities about technology, I actually had fun! It is exciting for all students, from GATE to Resource. I am grateful to Pioneer and CAG for this exceptional experience. I know it is something that my students and their families will always remember. Now too, my classroom is marching forward in the world of multimedia technology.

BECKY KOCH is the GATE Coordinator at Oak Hills Elementary School in Agoura, CA.

Gladstone Elementary School Multimedia Project

BY KAY MERCIA AND MARLA HUMPHREY

In October 1995, we became aware of a combined project between CAG and Pioneer New Media Technologies. It would involve *HyperStudio* and the ExploreR Series of laser discs from Pioneer. After an introductory meeting at the Pepperdine Satellite Campus, we began working with 10 fourth-grade GATE students. Eight of the students

worked on a California Indian project and two worked on an earth science project entitled "Restless Earth." (These topics were chosen because they are part of the fourth-grade core curriculum.)

At the beginning of the project we faced a major setback—we did not have the necessary computers and software. By the time the computers were up and running, it was the beginning of January. In the interim, the students had outlined their projects, written the text, and chosen both stills and video from the laser discs. Because of our late technical start, we began working on Saturdays. If we had not had a deadline for the March CAG Conference, we would have been able to manage our time and project more efficiently. This would have been beneficial both for our students and for us as teachers.

We found the Inspiration software program to be invaluable in creating webs (which were used instead of an outline to sequence the hypermedia stacks). A highlight of the Indian project was a Saturday interview with Jimi Castillo, a Tongva Indian tribal elder. The students were very interested in his views on nature and culture, and he in turn was impressed with their knowledge of California Indians and his tribe specifically. We also had the students write letters to the publishing companies asking permission to use their pictures in our projects. We heard back from two of the companies, and they were very pleased that students were acting in such an ethical manner.

In the future, both of us plan on creating other multimedia projects with our classes. This experience has given us ideas and better time management skills. It has been worth the time and effort.

KAY MERCIA and MARLA HUMPHREY teach fourth-grade GATE at Gladstone Elementary School in San Dimas, CA.

Monache High School at the CAG Conference

BY LEW WILLS

The CAG conference which Lew Wills, Ernie Lesseneger, and Jason Tungate recently participated in was designed to demonstrate the uses of Pioneer Multimedia equipment in the classroom. Even considering the limited resources that we had to work with, the possibilities for creative and informative projects were almost unlimited.

Our project was created on a Macintosh 5200 LC at 100MHz. We originally had only an external image digitizer (a device for transferring television signals from a TV to a computer) and a scanner to use in our project. Later on in the project, we began using an AV Macintosh which allowed us to take live video off the Pioneer Laserdisc player and display it on the computer screen.

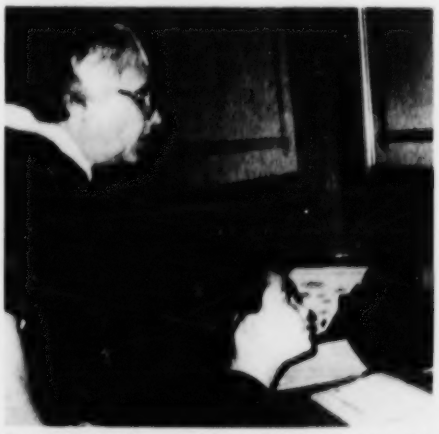
Our project's theme was Rome—a broad subject that allowed us to make use of all of *HyperStudio*'s features. Our project was divided into eight separate sections, each describing a different aspect of Roman life. Every section had a menu bar at the bottom containing buttons linked to a vocabulary page, a Latin Idioms page, and a credit screen.

We are currently adding capabilities to our project in preparation for our presentation at the Palm Springs CUE Conference. Among the features we have added so far are a timed test and a full screen video mode for viewing the film clips.

We have been working on this project for four months and have put over 200 hours into it. The program would be appropriate for elementary, junior, or senior high. Most classes would not use the *HyperLogo* functions (a programming language built into *HyperStudio*), or any of the advanced graphics features. However, *HyperLogo* provides an easy, educational, and fun way to make professional-looking presentations.

The video capabilities for this project were limited because the topic is historical and there are few royalty-free videos available. Sound was added through the courtesy of KTIP Radio in Porterville.

The process consisted of an interaction between the available research material and an idea outline. For some material we had graphics, but no research, while



Teacher learns from student in the CAG/Pioneer multimedia room

for other research material we could find no graphics to supplement the research to make it interesting.

A crucial design factor was to make the program interactive so that students could choose sections of interest rather than be forced through a "slide show." The areas of interest were: architecture, art, family life, economics, military, politics, and religion. A description and bibliography are available for this project.

DR. WILLS teaches at Monache High School in Porterville, CA. You may write him at 960 N. Newcomb, Porterville, CA 93257; e-mail: laustin@porterville.k12.ca.us; or fax at 209-781-3377.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you are *not* already a CAG member, please use the application below to become a continuing supporter of gifted education. Because CAG is active in lobbying efforts to promote appropriate education for gifted and talented students, dues payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

NAME: _____ (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Middle Initial)

PREFERRED ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ COUNTY: _____

PHONE: Home ( ) _____ Work ( ) _____ AFFILIATION: _____ (School district of employment or attendance)

MEMBERSHIP/SERVICE CATEGORY
(for mailing addresses outside the U.S., add $10)

- ☐ Individual ($50)
- ☐ Family ($60)
- ☐ Patron ($100)
- ☐ Sponsor ($300)
- ☐ Life ($500)
- ☐ Benefactor ($1000)
- ☐ Limited Income ($20, attach letter)
- ☐ Communicator Subscription only ($25)

ROLE

- ☐ Administrator/Coordinator
- ☐ Board of Education Member
- ☐ Consultant
- ☐ Counselor/Psychologist
- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other

SPECIAL SKILLS/INTERESTS

- ☐ Art/Music
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Computers
- ☐ Advocacy/Legislation
- ☐ Other

PAYMENT ENCLOSED

- ☐ Personal Check #
- ☐ District Check
- ☐ Purchase Order #

CHARGE: ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card No. _____

Exp. Date _____

Mail with check or charge information to California Association for the Gifted,
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040; Phone: 415/965-0653, Fax: 415/965-0654

California Association for the Gifted
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19 ■ Mountain View, CA 94040
Phone: 415-965-0653 ■ FAX: 415-965-0654

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Canoga Park, CA
Permit #330

ERIC Clearinghouse
Janet Drill
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589

Time Value
Dated Material

COMMUNICATOR

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

VOLUME 27 NO 4 FALL 1996

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

POLITICS

Gifted Bill of Rights
Barbara Clark provides a declaration for gifted children

Tech Net
How to connect with politics on the Net

You Can Make a Difference
Parents provide several ways to get involved and make a difference

Pondering Politics in the Classroom
Curriculum to complement the current political climate

Young People's Pullout
For and by the student with a political focus

CAG Leadership
A message from the CAG president

Gifted Education Politics: School Reform

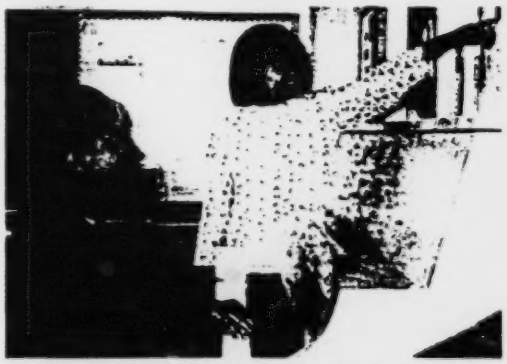
BY LISA JEFFREY

Due to a growing concern about low student achievement, the educational spotlight is once again brightly focused on public schools. As a result, the school reform movement has initiated globally some exciting changes including some which are aligned with gifted education. Gifted education has been in existence for a longer period of time than the school reform movement and has a specialized focus—to address the needs of gifted and talented learners.

In spite of similarities between school reform and gifted and talented education, current research shows that most gifted and talented students receive little differentiated instruction. Gifted and talented students must not be left out in the rush to improve the educational system. Classroom teachers must attend to the needs of these students also.

School Reform and Gifted Education: Historical Perspective

The school reform movement began to blossom in the United States after the publication of *A Nation At Risk* (1983), which alerted everyone to the fact that the academic preparation of students was inadequate. The study contends that students need a curriculum that will prepare them to become active participants in a democratic society. This curriculum should include not only a mastery of basic core subject skills but also opportunities to develop the ability to apply this knowledge—a thinking curriculum.



The idea of a balanced curriculum is part of the California State Frameworks. Students must not only acquire skills but also know how to apply them.

By the 1990s it became clear

See SCHOOL REFORM, 26

PUBLISHED BY THE CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR THE GIFTED

Executive Director, Carol Brown Spencer
415.965.0653 Fax 415.965.0654

The CAG Communicator is published four times during the year: Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer. Opinions expressed by individual authors do not necessarily represent official positions of the Association. Subscriptions are available to non-members at an annual cost of $25.00.

OFFICERS 1996–1998

Executive Committee

President: Margaret Gosfield
Vice President: Marge Hoctor
Secretary: Dana Reupert
Treasurer: Judith Roseberry
State Parent Council Chair: Sharon Freitas
Past President: Martha Flournoy

Regional Representatives

Bay Area	Judy Witt
	Patty Bort
Capitol	Nancy R. Craig
	Mary J. Paxton
Joshua Tree	John P. DeLandtsheer
	Darlene Dolan
Mission	Nancy Epstein
	Beth Petak-Aaron
Mt. Shasta	Michael Ann Rossi
	Marie J. Doherty
Orange	Iris Yamaoka
	S. Raenele Côté
Pacific	Linda Calvin
	Judith C. Smith
Palomar	Marcia DiJiosia
	Charle K. Drummond
Redwood	Bruce DeVries
	Myra Kaye
San Joaquin	Cathleen Silva
	Doris M. Pacheco
Santa Lucia	Geri Williams
	Margaret Rodrigues

COMMUNICATOR EDITORIAL BOARD

Editor: Vicki Bortolussi
Associate Editors
Curriculum: Angel Barrett
Children's Topics: Linda Brug
Parents: Marilyn Morrison
Special Projects: Lisa Heimlich
Technology: Judy Lieb
Production: Madsteve
Special Assistance: Ann Peake

SUBMISSION OF MATERIAL

To submit articles for publication, send hardcopy and a 3.5-inch disk (Mac or PC) saved as a text (ASCII) file. All submissions will be given careful consideration. Photos and camera-ready artwork are particularly desirable. Send all material with your name, address, phone number, fax number, and Internet address to Vicki Bortolussi, ***Communicator*** Editor, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Rd., Moorpark, CA 93021 Tel: 805-378-1405, vckib@aol.com

REPRINTING OF MATERIALS

Articles appearing in the ***Communicator*** may be reprinted as desired unless marked by © or reprinted from another source. Please credit the ***Communicator*** and send a copy of your publication containing the reprint to the Editor.

CONTENTS

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

1 **Gifted Education Politics: School Reform**
Lisa Jeffrey

8 **PARENT TO PARENT, You Can Make a Difference**
"A Problem for One, a Solution for Many"
Raenele Côté
"Shaking Up the System"
Carol Schneiderman Knee

12 **How Can I Get Involved?**
Lisa M. Heimlich

13 **A Declaration of the Educational Rights of the Gifted Child**
Barbara Clark

14 **Seven Characteristics of Highly Effective Technology Leaders**
John A. Vaille

19 **TECH NET, Government and Politics on the Net**
Judy Lieb

3 **Calendar**

3 **Letters**

4 **From the President**

5 **From the Editor**

5 **News Notes**

6 **On the Home Front,** Raising Our Children to be Educated Voters, Marilyn Morrison

15 **Young People's Pullout**, Linda Brug

22 **Hands-On Curriculum,** Pondering Politics in the Classroom, Victoria Siegel and Sandra N. Kaplan

30 **Picturing California**, Barbara Becker

HOW TO REACH CAG

MAIL
Write to Carol Brown Spencer, Executive Director, CAG, 426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040.

PHONE OR FAX
To reach the CAG Office by telephone, call 415-965-0653; to contact by FAX, dial 415-965-0654.

AMERICA ONLINE
Direct inquiries to the CAG Office via America Online. Our e-mail address is cbs2000@aol.com.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR
Write to Dr. Vicki Bortolussi, Moorpark College, 7075 Campus Road, Moorpark, CA 93021. Tel: 805-378-1405, vckib@aol.com

WEB SITE
http://members.aol.com/cagifted/cag.htm

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LETTERS

CAG Founder Adds Insight

I read the article on CAG Reflections by Judy Roseberry in the *Communicator* (Summer 1996). Since I was closely involved in the founding of the California Association for the Gifted, I would like to correct some of the errors in the article.

The ideas for the organization began when Ruth Martinson and I attended a meeting of The Council For Exceptional Children. At that time the Gifted were a part of special education. We were upset because at the national conferences the sessions on the gifted usually were minimal and individuals involved in special education were not very concerned about the gifted.

We decided that it would be appropriate to try to launch a state organization that would address itself solely to gifted education.

For various reasons, Ruth Martinson did not want to take on the role of leading this effort. She asked me to assume the leadership in getting the organization started. This I agreed to do, and we spent considerable time in communicating with individuals who might be interested in the formation of an association for the gifted. It took almost two years of: 1) getting key people in the field interested in developing the organization; 2) scheduling and chairing monthly meetings; 3) keeping in close contact with committee members; 4) working with committees to develop a constitution; 5) setting up CAG as a tax-free state and federal education corporation; 6) recruiting the first members of the association; 7) designing and developing the program for the third annual conference for the new California Association for the Gifted. This was held at UCLA in 1965, and I was selected to be the first president of the organization. (Two other conferences had been given on the gifted prior to the birth of the organization.)

On January 22, 1966, the fourth annual conference for the California Association for the Gifted was held in Long Beach. As president I presided over the conference, and Jeanne Delp was then selected to be president for the following year. The IRS made us make some changes in the bylaws, and as the elected new president, Jeanne Delp signed the papers.

I am enclosing copies of the conferences for 1966, 1967, and 1968. I have the originals and will try to find the copy of the conference at UCLA. Please note in the conference of January 22, 1966, I am listed as president. Jeanne Delp is listed as vice-president. She became president after the vote at the conference.

Through the years, I have watched a dream come true. CAG has grown into a strong and effective organization through the efforts of many dedicated and excellent leaders. Although I have not been very active for years in the organization, I have been and still am an ardent advocate of gifted education. I do sincerely believe that it is not appropriate to alter the facts and not even mention my name in the history of the organization. I would appreciate rectification of the data.

Sincerely yours,
Jean Wiener

Editor's Note

The information for the article, "CAG Reflections," was taken from previous Communicators. *Some editions were missing; some issues were incomplete. Researching other sources, such as interviewing Dr. Wiener, would have been appropriate. No disrespect was intended and Dr. Wiener certainly would have been a reliable source. The editor and the author sincerely apologize to Dr. Wiener and appreciate her insight in correcting CAG's history. The work and contributions of Jean Wiener are most respected. She has had a lasting impact on the professionals in gifted education. Now it is also known that she has had tremendous impact on the professional organization known as the California Association for the Gifted. The* Communicator *and CAG history stand corrected.*

CALENDAR

OCTOBER 26, 1996
'96 Conference Committee Meeting, 10 A.M.–2 P.M. Sacramento Hyatt Regency Hotel

OCTOBER 30–NOVEMBER 3
National Association for Gifted Children Annual Convention, Indianapolis, Indiana. For information, call the NAGC office at 202-785-4268.

NOVEMBER 22–24, 1996
CAG Board Meeting. Sacramento Clarion Hotel, Sacramento

JANUARY 10–12, 1997
CAG Board Meeting. San Diego Town & Country Hotel

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 28–March 2, 1997

35th Annual CAG Conference

Sacramento

FEBRUARY 28–MARCH 2, 1997
***35th Annual CAG Conference,* "Discover Gold! Mining Gate Resources," Hyatt Regency Hotel and Sacramento Conference Center**

APRIL 18–20, 1997
CAG Board Meeting. LAX Hilton, Los Angeles

JUNE 6–8, 1997
CAG Board Meeting. Santa Clara Westin Hotel

JULY 7–18, 1997
The University of Connecticut Confratute '97 in Storrs, CT. "Developing 'Giftedness' in *All* of Our Students." To be placed on the mailing list for future brochures, contact Confratute '97, University of Connecticut, 364 Fairfield Road, U-7, Storrs, CT 06269-2007. Or visit on the web at www.uoc.uconn.edu/~wwwgt.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

MARGARET GOSFIELD

Too many of us, politics is a dirty word, especially as we are in the midst of a presidential election and inundated with campaign rhetoric and television ads. Too often, politics is seen as evil but necessary, since we live in a complex world and a democratic country. But the world of politics can be vastly improved if we focus on raising the level of leadership.

Raising the level of leadership is one of the goals of the CAG Board; we plan to focus on effective leadership at all levels. As CAG president I hope to use to the fullest the organizational skills I developed as a teacher, district coordinator, CAG regional representative, and conference chair to make our organization run smoothly and effectively. We have appointed able committee chairs who are already making plans to develop and implement their respective activities with the common goal of furthering the educational opportunities for gifted children throughout the state.

At the regional level we will continue to emphasize the development of leadership committees so that the work of each region rests not only on the shoulders of its two regional representatives, but on those of a whole cadre of individuals who will join in seeing that all schools are made aware of the opportunities for gifted students and are stimulated to make these opportunities a reality.

To further this goal, we plan special efforts to assist in the formation of and service to affiliate groups within the regions. We have found active affiliate groups to be most effective as resources for both parents and educators. If you do not already have a local affiliate group, we urge you to contact your regional representative or the CAG office to request information on how to get one started.

Many opportunities for leadership exist at the local level also, and CAG may assist you here as well. If you are a parent, you should know that every district receiving funds for gifted programs must have a parents' advisory group; find out how you can participate. If you are an educator, be sure that your district is taking advantage of the various staff development opportunities sponsored by CAG, including Teacher Institutes around the state and the Certificate of Completion program. Of course, remember our annual conference, which includes both local presenters and state and national leaders in the field who each year enlighten and inspire us.

Yes, politics can be a dirty word; but we can use our own politics, our own organized efforts, to realize, even more than we have already done, the lofty goals that justify our existence. ■

Discover Gold!

There's gold in them thar' hills!

Don't miss CAG's 35th Annual Conference at the Sacramento Convention Center and Hyatt Regency Hotel, February 28–March 3, 1996.

Pan from 130 presentations on issues important to teaching and parenting gifted children. Dig into CAG's Technology/Multimedia Room to design your own classroom strategies. And cash in with CAG's Keynote-on-a-pommel-horse by former G/T student and gold medal Olympian Peter Vidmar.

Special Events include a Pre-Conference with Sally Reis and Carolyn Callahan from the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented. Sign up for Classroom Observations, Gold Country Tour, and Murder on the Delta King. Take the Night Train to Dinner, tour Old Sacramento, and enjoy Melodrama at the Eagle Theater.

FROM THE EDITOR

VICKI BORTOLUSSI

November 1996. National presidential elections. The last such election before the year 2000. So what, you may ask? What does politics have to do with our lives, with education, and, specifically, with gifted education.

Like it or not, the answer to that question is that politics has everything to do with the lives and the education of all students, including those who are gifted. Thus, this issue of the *Communicator* explores the political dimensions of gifted education. The goal is that by understanding more about education as a political system, we can positively influence it rather than negatively falling victim to it. We can be proactive rather than reactive. We can lead rather than follow.

One major educational political issue is school reform. Lisa Jeffrey provides a thorough look at what this important movement has to do with gifted education. School reform will continue to be a major issue into the year 2000. As we understand it, we can shape it to reform gifted education in the process. Educational reform is inevitable but not yet fully defined. Where will gifted education fit in the education reform equation? What are the Goals 2000 and where do goals for gifted education belong? What is the GATE funding picture?

Another aspect of politics is what are the roles of political science, political philosophy, and contemporary candidates in the curriculum? Sandra Kaplan and Victoria Siegel provide a hands-on curriculum guide on these topics that can be put to use immediately. Whether situated in the educational reform movement or in the classroom, Lisa Heimlich outlines how each individual can be an advocate for gifted education. In Marilyn Morrison's Parent Topics Section, she and two other parents give illuminating views of how parents can and must influence the gifted educational system.

To access important political information, Judy Lieb's Technology Section gives important Internet connections. John Vaille identifies leadership characteristics, which, hopefully, are connected to politics. For our future leaders, the Young People's Pullout provides election connections, readings, and writings by gifted students.

November 1996. A major election and many minor elections fraught with political issues. The Fall 1996 issue of the *Communicator* focuses on politics to make a difference in the future of gifted education. Read on! ■

NEWS NOTES

Sacramento Politics Favor College Attendance While in High School

Students who are 11th and 12th graders can now attend community colleges as well as high schools without the school district losing any funding. Governor Wilson recently signed SB292 which allows for high school and community college attendance without fiscal penalty. Passage of this bill was the result of local advocacy which convinced legislators of the importance of making this technical change to the policy which previously penalized students and K–12 districts. ■

Plan Now for Future Communicators

Themes for upcoming issues of the *Communicator* are as follows. Your ideas, articles, and other contributions are welcomed on Gifted At Risk; School Systems, including private schools, home schooling, technology, schools within schools, magnet schools, and other options; Diversity. *Communicator* editors want to include your work. Let them hear from you. ■

ON THE HOME FRONT

BY MARILYN MORRISON

RAISING OUR CHILDREN TO BE EDUCATED VOTERS

On November 6, 1984, in the midst of an agonizing 22 hours of labor, the pain of delivering my first child was made worse by the realization that there was no way I was going to make it to the polls to cast my vote for Geraldine Ferraro for vice-president. Intellectually, I knew that my vote probably wouldn't make a difference in the final outcome. Emotionally, I wanted my voice to be heard. I wanted to know that I had tried to help elect America's first woman vice-president.

Unfortunately, many Americans are apathetic about the political process, and our children are inheriting that apathy. Democracy depends on informed citizens making informed decisions. Parents and educators must teach kids why and how we vote, just as we teach them how to recycle garbage and say no to drugs. It is especially important to train gifted students to develop their information-gathering skills and prepare them to be active participants in the voting process. As Jean Frick, director of voter service outreach for the League of Women Voters in Los Angeles, points out, "Our gifted and talented students are really going to be setting the goals for the future—as leaders, thinkers, artists."

Susan and Ken Marangell, parents of fifth-grade twins who attend Balboa Gifted/High Ability Magnet in Northridge, are teaching their children about politics by *just doing it*. They explain how important each issue is to them and assume that "kids—if they're curious, if they ask questions—should be included." In 1992, when the Marangells hosted political fundraisers at their home, the kids helped decorate the house and handed out flyers in the neighborhood. During the recent battle over desegregation funding for magnet schools, the

Marangell children witnessed their parents making flyers and organizing the parents at their school to respond to the crisis. As Susan pointed out, "They saw us get information, do research, and call senators." Susan has served as a precinct captain and Ken has volunteered at the polls on election day. So their children are no strangers to the voting process. Susan added, "We don't belabor it—the main thing is to show that we're involved and that it's important to us.... It's mostly been by example."

There are many resources available to help parents raise their children to be educated voters. One grassroots project which is enjoying some success is Kids Voting USA, a nonprofit, nonpartisan program whose goal is to prepare current and future generations of citizens to participate in their government. Students in kindergarten through high school study a curriculum which stresses six key concepts: I have the right to vote; I have the responsibility to vote; I gather information; I weigh the information; I make the decision and act upon it; I watch the election and continue my involvement. The program includes debates, mock elections, and voter registration, culminating on election day with students voting side by side with their parents at official polling sites. According to Cynthia Dunn, director of communications and development in the group's national headquarters, Kids Voting is a cooperative effort between school district superintendents, election officials, and corporate sponsors. The program exists in about 6,000 schools in 40 states. In California, school districts in Sacramento, San Francisco, and the Silicon Valley currently participate. One interesting accomplishment of Kids Voting has been to increase *adult* voter turnout by an average of 3% in areas where students were participating in the program.

The League of Women Voters has also launched a national mock election project in which students will study and vote on two ballot initiatives. The results of the mock election, with a broadcast date of October 30, 1996, will be shown on CNN. Before every election, parents and teachers can obtain copies of the League's compilation of the pros and cons of ballot initiatives as well as literature and speakers for

assemblies or PTA meetings. Schools can also arrange to get copies of the film *Why Vote?* (in Spanish or English) from the League or the public library.

As for most subjects, there is now computer software to help you learn about the election process. In The Doonesbury Election Game: Campaign '96 (©1995 Mindscape, Inc., Windows CD-ROM), you act as the campaign manager choosing your candidate, staffing your campaign, creating advertising, managing the books, and even hiring a dirty tricks specialist. The program includes a large database of real-life voter attitudes and allows you to choose your candidates from the past, present, or your imagination.

Vote America - Your Field Guide to Electing a President (©Virtual Entertainment, Inc., Mac/Windows CD-ROM) features an in-depth look at the presidential candidates including digital movies of campaign speeches, the candidates' stances on the issues, and public opinion polls. The program, designed to be used in conjunction with America Online, comes with trial AOL software so that you can download the latest campaign changes and be automatically updated with the latest polls and news stories as well as be connected to politically active Web sites.

One such site is at http://www.mcrel.org/connect/plus/. Scroll down to "Civics" and click on "Political Participation" for a list of other election-related sites and lesson plans, including "Rock the Vote." Formed in 1990 by members of the recording industry, "Rock the Vote" is dedicated to protecting freedom of speech; educating young people about issues that affect them; and motivating young people to participate by registering, voting, and speaking out.

At home, discuss the issues on the ballot with your children. Make it clear to them that although it is important to participate in every election, it is not necessary to vote on every item on the ballot. Advise them to vote on the races with which they are familiar and on the issues which they have researched and understand. Take your children with you to the voting booth. My husband and I have always let our children punch the ballot for us and have taught them that our votes are private. Respect your children's opinions about issues and candidates. They may disagree with you, but if they have arrived at their opinions through research and can defend them, you must regard them as valid.

The political process in our country is often frustratingly slow, and it may be hard to convince your children (and yourselves) that one vote can make a difference. However, as Ms. Frick reminds us, "Things don't change overnight, but we can't be discouraged. When we vote, we're setting a direction for our children and grandchildren." ■

MARILYN MORRISON is the parent of two gifted children. She is the *Communicator* associate editor for parent topics.

Do you involve your children/students in politics? Let us know. Write to the Communicator *editor.*

KIDS VOTING

Ballot A	YES	NO
1. School	☐	☐
2. Recess	☐	☐
3. Ice Cream	☐	☐
4. Homework	☐	☐
5. Television	☐	☐

Ballot B	YES	NO
1. School will be year-round.	☐	☐
2. Recess will be replaced by 20 minutes of sit-ups and push-ups.	☐	☐
3. Only garlic flavored ice cream will be served in the cafeteria.	☐	☐
4. There will be no homework on the weekends.	☐	☐
5. Television will be in the classroom, but only educational programs will be viewed.	☐	☐

This is a sample Kids Voting USA Curriculum Activity, from the 4th-grade level, which teaches students the difference between making an informed vote versus an uninformed vote.

You CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Editor's Note: In this issue, we present two stories by parents who have successfully improved the education of gifted students. Advocacy is politics in action at a grassroots level, and we hope that these examples of commitment, diplomacy, and persistence will inspire other parents to become advocates for their children.

A PROBLEM FOR ONE, A SOLUTION FOR MANY

BY RAENELE CÔTÉ

My mother, a wise and wonderful woman, constantly reminded me while I was growing up that a good education was my most valuable asset. Unlike material possessions, money, or even beauty, it could never be lost or taken away. Even if I were unlucky in my life and lost everything, my education would be the tool through which I could maintain my self-respect and regain a comfortable position in life.

I never doubted her for a moment, and I have preached the same message to my own children, urging them to take their schooling seriously, to study hard, and to take advantage of every opportunity. But sometimes that is not enough. Sometimes the classes offered to them, even GATE and honors classes, were not challenging, and I found myself evaluating my role as a parent. Was it enough to turn my children over to their schools and hope that the professional educators would do what was best for them? Or should I monitor their classes myself and advocate for changes based on my perceptions of my children's abilities and educational needs?

Strength in Numbers

I opted for an active role. So when my son's sixth-grade math curriculum looked weak, I initiated an effort to change it. Andrew has always been good in math—he taught himself most of the multiplication tables in first grade. By the time he started sixth grade, he was ready to study higher math concepts such as algebra. However, when I examined his math textbook, I was appalled to find that the entire book was merely a review of concepts he had mastered in the fourth and fifth grades! He was not scheduled to begin studying pre-algebra until seventh grade. I approached the administration of the school (a private one) and pleaded his case.

The school was unable to place Andrew in the seventh-grade pre-algebra class because of logistical problems. As far as the school was concerned, that was the end of the discussion. But I continued to insist that my child needed a more challenging course of study. When it occurred to me that there were actually several others in his class who would benefit from an advanced math course, I proposed that the school try a pilot program for qualified sixth graders to study pre-algebra. Because

there were enough students to create an entire sixth-grade section, the school's logistical objections became moot and the class was established. The program was such a success that the school will be starting its fourth year of pre-algebra classes for sixth graders this fall.

New School, New Challenges

The spring before he was to begin seventh grade, Andrew decided he wanted to leave the private school and enroll in our local public middle school. Because he was completing pre-algebra, with honors, I assumed it would be no problem to enroll him in algebra in the middle school, even though the class was made up exclusively of eighth graders. I was surprised to find, however, that I had to mount another campaign to ensure that my son was enrolled in the appropriate math course.

Fortunately, Andrew had given me ample warning that he wanted to change schools—timing is of the utmost importance when trying to change the standard curriculum. Even if they have the best intentions, it is not easy for school administrators to juggle schedules to accommodate special needs, and it can be impossible to do so without adequate time.

I was able to convince the middle school principal of the expedience of enrolling Andrew in algebra. It was quite another matter with the counselor. She informed me that under no circumstances would she enroll a seventh grader in algebra. Amazingly, her reason was that seventh graders and eighth graders did not get along. However, because I had already persuaded the principal and because I had time to maneuver, I was able to override her veto.

My younger son is beginning seventh grade; he is quite good in math and will study algebra this year. I began working with the middle school principal on his placement over a year ago. I was advocating not only for a special program for my son, but also to expand the honors math curriculum by increasing the enrollment of qualified seventh graders in algebra. There was only one seventh grader enrolled in algebra in our middle school last year and the year before. This year, there may be as many as five—maybe next year we will have 10.

Advocacy Carries Responsibility

Being an advocate for your childrenís education is not an easy task. It requires the dedication of a great deal of time and effort and a good measure of diplomacy. Without diplomacy, all your time and effort can go to waste. It also requires a firm conviction that the changes you want in your child's curriculum are vitally necessary. If your commitment is lukewarm, not only will you be easily discouraged, but school administrators will not take you seriously.

Finally, keep in mind that advocacy carries responsibility. If you succeed in convincing your school to design a special program for your child, monitor his or her progress. Whether the program you advocated turns out to be satisfactory or not, share your insights with the school to aid in the development of future special programs.

A good education, together with unconditional love, is the best legacy you can give your children. Working hard as an advocate for their education is an expression of that love. ■

RAENELE CÔTÉ is CAG's Orange Region parent representative.

SHAKING UP THE SYSTEM

BY CAROL SCHNEIDERMAN KNEE

This article illustrates how a small group of parents gained a voice in a very large school district. After two years of battling the critical issue of lack of space for gifted children

in appropriate academic programs in the Los Angeles Unified School District, there is some positive news to report. I hope that more parents will be encouraged to add their voices to the movement to improve gifted education in districts throughout California.

In my case, the seeds of this movement were planted soon after the devastating 1994 Northridge Earthquake. At the time, my son was in fifth grade at a very popular top-scoring gifted/ high-ability elementary school magnet in the San Fernando Valley. Many of the children had been admitted to the magnet in the third grade when two additional classes were added. We had all waited years for this opportunity and were very pleased with the education that our children were receiving. In shock after the quake, we banded together for comfort and support and did everything within our power to keep our school open and to protect the children.

Room mothers telephoned parents to inform them of the condition of the school. When it was safe for the children to return, we served bottled water and cleaned, prepared, and inventoried earthquake supplies. Necessity had created enduring friendships and a sense of cohesive community.

A Different Kind of Disaster

In the midst of the havoc wreaked by the quake, our school community had to face the school board's devastating decision to reconfigure its magnet schools from a K–6 to a K–5 system.

Board members refused our requests to postpone the reconfiguration. On the heels of this upheaval, the quake delayed the due date for magnet applications as well as the announcement of the results of that application process. We did not discover until graduation day in June that our children were hopelessly mired on long waiting lists for the gifted middle school magnets and that, due to the District's rigid point system for magnet programs, they had little hope of ever being admitted to a gifted magnet again.

We felt angry, betrayed, and worst of all, helpless. The magnet rejection letters were received after the last day of school, and we could not obtain further information on waiting list openings until September. We had to do something. The strong bonds that had formed during those dark days after the earthquake became even stronger. The room mothers used the telephone trees we had used after the earthquake to contact parents to see if their children had a suitable place to attend school in the fall. We discovered two things: there were many parents facing the same crisis; and, due to the point structure for the magnets, qualified children residing in many cities within the San Fernando Valley were being prevented from attending gifted magnets.

We realized that we represented strong voting blocks for two board members, and we urged parents to contact those board members with the facts of their individual cases and demand solutions. When parents asked if we thought it would do any good, we explained to them that we had nothing to lose. The worst had already happened, and we had to try.

Persistence Pays Off

Parents became empowered and relentless. We discovered that we were entitled to request certain public information from the board and that, within limits, they were required to provide us with that information. Not only were we vocal advocates, we were articulate and well informed.

Finally, one board member agreed to meet with us—for the first time, we felt like we were being heard. Angry parents packed the crowded room and demanded action. District representatives took notes and promised to address our concerns. We continued the pressure, and the District worked feverishly to achieve an acceptable solution.

The result was success beyond our wildest dreams. A new middle school magnet, in close proximity to our gifted/high ability elementary school magnet, was expanded to accommodate the displaced students. Two new honors classes were added in the sixth grade, and bungalows were moved onto the campus to house the additional students. Representatives from the District's Gifted and Talented Office were consulted and quickly established a program to meet the needs of these gifted students.

Most important, we recognized that we could make a difference in this mammoth district if we combined our voices.

We soon realized, however, that the battle for slots in high school gifted/talented programs was even more daunting, and we knew that we had to take immediate action or face a more serious problem in three years. In the San Fernando Valley that year, there were only about 900 available seats in gifted/high ability magnets at the middle school level, even though there were over 2,000 students enrolled at the elementary gifted/high ability magnets. At the high school level, there were approximately 201 available seats at a magnet for highly gifted students located in the Valley and only 300 seats set aside in the entire District—at a magnet in South Central Los Angeles—for gifted/high-ability high school students.

Again, we went into action. We organized a group of parents, selected a name for our group, began writing letters outlining crucial issues, requested information pertinent to gifted education, and arranged meetings with our representatives. We urged parents to call other parents and enlist them. Attendance at our meetings grew in size until finally we insisted that one of the meetings be publicized through fliers sent home at designated gifted magnets.

Over 300 people attended that meeting and it lasted for hours. We were exhilarated by the turnout, and the three board members in attendance—Mark Slavkin, Julie Korenstein, and David Tokofsky—were impressed by the passion of our cause and have continued to support it.

One of the items listed on our agenda of crucial issues was the establishment of a committee on

gifted education. The leaders of our group were invited to another meeting with top District staff members at which the Ad Hoc Committee on Gifted Education was designed and implemented. I was later asked by District staff members to attend meetings in other parts of the vast District to recruit members from diverse backgrounds and geographic areas.

Formal Committee Established

Once the committee began meeting, we discovered that its members had a lot in common. Generally, we wanted more children to be identified and more programs to be established that would suit the needs of gifted children in every geographic area of the District. After identifying problems with the District's current attempts to educate its gifted students and presenting a series of recommendations to the Curriculum Committee last June, the Ad Hoc Committee received board approval to continue its essential work this coming year.

This has been a long, hard struggle, and there are more battles yet to be won. The lesson to be learned is that we must all raise our voices and be heard. We must never sit back and say, "What good will it do?" Enlist your friends and your neighbors, form your own organizations, become informed, organize a telephone and writing campaign to educate your representatives, speak at community and school board meetings, and schedule your own meetings with school board members. We must all raise our voices to help all of our children. ■

CAROL SCHNEIDERMAN KNEE serves as a parent representative on LAUSD's Ad Hoc Committee for Gifted Education.

I AM...

I am creator, delightfully abstract
I wonder about life, and why we are here
I hear instructing voices from far and near
I see vivid dreams, to become realities
I want my ideas to be saved forever, intact
I am a creator, delightfully abstract

I pretend I am far from here, in a clouded world of twisted visions
I feel delighted and calmed, alone and at ease
I touch gently my world, held soft on the breeze
I worry of the truth, different than we may perceive
I cry when day upon day, time not permitting, to put my mind back
I am a creator, delightfully abstract

I understand that true desires are the only things that count
I say "follow your heart" and do what you must, time may run out
I dream that one day, my visions, will appear before me
I try to triumph, and enjoy myself, let my life be
I hope I am able, to do what I wish, what I lack
I am a creator, delightfully abstract.

Brian Wood
Grade 8, Cerro Villa Middle School
Orange
Joyce Krauser, teacher

NOT NOW

Not Now.
Later, when They have left
When I can present without an audience
While I am still calm
Without worry of humiliation

Not Now.
Later, when They have left
When I can keep it to myself
So that I won't have to face the Others
Because I am so afraid I might Fail.

Please. Don't let Them see.

Jasmine Bina
Grade 8, Cerro Villa Middle School
Orange
Joyce Krauser, teacher

How Can I Get Involved?

Being an advocate for gifted education at all levels of government

BY LISA M. HEIMLICH

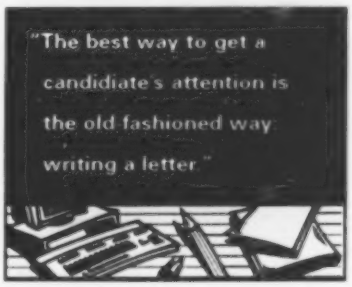
Election Day is fast approaching, and you can take an active role in the process. Teachers, parents, students, and all concerned individuals can help get out information about the needs of the gifted student population. Here are a few pointers to get you started in the right direction.

Across the state this November, elections will be held for not just the presidency, but also for local school boards, municipal and countywide offices, the California State Assembly and State Senate, and the U.S. Congress. Not only will your votes be important in the usual sense, but all ballots cast will essentially be taking a stand on education. It is vital that you become advocates for gifted students at this crucial time in history: budgets are shrinking, but the need for more specialized teacher training and other programs for the gifted is increasing.

The first step for you is research. Not all candidates were created equal; consequently, their viewpoints on education, especially of the gifted, may be radically different. Some candidates may not even have gifted students as part of their agenda. It is your job, since you are educated about the needs of this special population, to inform these candidates of the needs and rights of gifted children. Barbara Clark, professor of education at California State University at Los Angeles and a past president of both the California Association for the Gifted (CAG) and the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGC), has compiled a list of the 15 basic rights of gifted students today (see related article). This list can be used as a guide for educating not only the candidates but the electorate as well.

A good step toward casting an educated vote this November is to contact incumbents and their opposing candidates as well as anyone else running for office. Attend local rallies and debates to hear the candidates speak about the big issues in the campaign. Keep in mind that you may not get specific questions about gifted education answered in these settings. The best way to get a candidate's attention is the old-fashioned way: writing a letter. In these day of e-mail, letter writing might seem obsolete. But whether you use your computer or the postal service, writing is still an effective way to get your points across cogently.

When writing a letter to a candidate, immediately identify who you are. State which constituency you represent and that you are a member of a statewide organization such as CAG. This will make it apparent that you are an expert on the subject you are writing about. Next write about your deep interest in the campaign including ways in which you have gotten involved. Have you volunteered for a candidate, helped host a debate or rally, or read the campaign literature sent to you in the mail? These are good things for you to note. They indicate that you, your friends, and family are concerned voters who are most likely going to vote. Remember, busy campaign workers need to concern themselves most with people who are most likely to vote rather than disinterested citizens.



In the next paragraph state that gifted education is a top priority for you in this election and explain why. Has your son or daughter been identified as gifted? Are you a teacher of gifted students? A brief explanation of such topics provides background to the reader. Now you can state your main concerns and questions. Use the list of rights (p. 13) to develop a focus on what is most important to you. Then write about that issue. For example, if you are most concerned about gifted children being grouped with other gifted children for part of the school day to heighten understanding and provide challenges, write about that being a fundamental right of gifted children.

Next ask the candidates how they feel about your concern or issue and if they would like to see more funding for this kind of educational experience. Explain how gifted education is handled currently in your district and how you would either like it expanded or kept at the same high standard.

End your letter briefly and ask for a reply as soon as possible so you can form your decisions about the race. State that you will be sending an identical letter to all the other candidates (and then do it!) and that you look forward to hearing back soon. Be sure to include your address (or e-mail address) on the letter so it can be found easily for a prompt reply. Keep in mind that your letters need to be concise and to the point so that they are read and taken seriously.

You can have an effect on gifted education with just a little bit of dedication on your part these next few months. So, get out there to meet those candidates, and happy letter writing. ■

LISA HEIMLICH teaches in the San Francisco Unified School District and is the associate editor for special projects for the *Communicator*.

A Declaration of the Educational Rights of the Gifted Child

BY BARBARA CLARK

It is the right of a gifted child to engage in appropriate educational experiences even when other children of the grade level or age are unable to profit from the experience.

It is the right of a gifted child to be grouped and interact with other gifted children for some part of their learning experience so that they may be understood, engaged, and challenged.

It is the right of a gifted child to be taught rather than to be used as a tutor or teaching assistant for the major part of their school day.

It is the right of a gifted child to be presented with new, advanced, and challenging ideas and concepts regardless of the materials and resources that have been designated for the age group or grade level in which the child was placed.

It is the right of a gifted child to be taught the concepts that the child does not yet know instead of relearning old concepts that the child has already shown evidence of mastering.

It is the right of a gifted child to learn faster than age peers and to have that pace of learning respected and provided for.

It is the right of a gifted child to think in alternative ways, produce diverse products, and to bring intuition and innovation to the learning experience.

It is the right of a gifted child to be idealistic and sensitive to fairness, justice, accuracy, and the global problems facing humankind and to have a forum for expressing these concerns.

It is the right of a gifted child to question generalizations, offer alternative solutions, and value complex and profound levels of thought.

It is the right of a gifted child to be intense, persistent, and goal-directed in their pursuit of knowledge.

It is the right of a gifted child to express a sense of humor that is unusual, playful, and often complex.

It is the right of a gifted child to hold high expectations for self and others and to be sensitive to inconsistency between ideals and behavior with the need to have help in seeing the value in human differences.

It is the right of a gifted child to be a high achiever in some areas of the curriculum and not in others making thoughtful, knowledgeable, academic placement a necessity.

It is the right of a gifted child to have a low tolerance for the lag between vision and actualization, between personal standards and developed skill, and between physical maturity and athletic ability.

It is the right of a gifted child to pursue interests that are beyond the ability of the age peers, are outside of the grade level curriculum, or involve areas as yet unexplored or unknown.

These rights have been reprinted with permission from *Communique*, the newsletter of the National Association for Gifted Children, Vol. V, No. 4, July 1993. Barbara Clark is a professor of education at California State University at Los Angeles, and past president of CAG and NAGC.

Seven Characteristics of Highly Effective Technology Leaders

BY JOHN A. VAILLE

After 22 years as a California teacher and principal, I must confess that I frequently find myself alternating between scratching my head in confusion and mumbling "no, duh!" when reading many of the leadership/management books so popular these days. Stephen Covey, Margaret Wheatley, and Peter Senge, among others, seem to be everywhere—from PBS to the shelves of airport newsstands. Their ideas often seem to have great relevance to my work and other times to touch on themes which are outside my experience.

All these authors developed their theories in the context of world economic systems. Much of what these authors have to say has not reached the ears of California K-12 educators. While there are huge differences between public educational institutions and privately held businesses, it is important that these differences do not obscure some of these authors' messages for school people. This article is intended as a call to leadership for the teachers and administrators who are California's technology leaders.

You may detect a similarity in my title to the incredibly popular work of Stephen R. Covey. It is not entirely coincidental! Lists are an effective method of organizing thought. I have created a list of characteristics and actions which I am convinced must be adopted by California leaders wishing to be effective in making systemic change in schools and classrooms using technology. It is my list. You will undoubtedly think of other characteristics to add to your list. The critical challenge is for leaders to *have* a list of these issues and apply them.

CHARACTERISTIC 1

Vision — Build a Shared One.

As Seneca said a couple of thousand years ago, "When a man does not know what harbor he is making for, no wind is a right wind." If you want to make a difference, you have to have an idea of what you want to do. A vision of a technology-rich learning environment for a community's school is a complex matter because it must encompass the ideas of many people. It is a critical success factor of any such vision that it be created and owned by a sufficient number of people.

There is no better way to test a vision than to expose it to the harsh light of criticism. You will quickly learn if your ideas are clear and your vision inspiring to others. A clear vision, designed by those affected, will provide you with that "right wind."

CHARACTERISTIC 2

Assume leadership— but be prepared for new leaders to emerge.

This characteristic is inextricably linked to Characteristic 3. Don't be timid! Seize the leadership role. However, be sensitive to the important relationship between leaders and followers.

Anyone who is thinking about assuming leadership ought to read Peter Senge's book, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization* (1994). In it Senge defines the new work of the leader as designer, teacher, and steward.

The role of the designer is very often neglected by educators. We stay "within the box" way too much, allowing existing conditions to limit our vision. Leaders who design can define the box and ensure that it contains all the tools necessary to get the job done.

Senge uses the term "teacher" in the same way that James MacGregor Burns (1978) used the term "transformational leadership." The teacher helps the organization confront its models and assumptions and examine them. In the process the leader and the organization learn ways in which to move forward. Senge's third leadership role is stewardship. His idea is that the leader is also the servant of those she leads. A leader must stay in touch with those who have agreed to be led and be prepared to step aside for a time and let others express their commitment to the vision as a leader. If you insist in being the sole torch bearer, you will only get burned.

Lao-tzu once said, "A bad leader is one whom the people despise. A good leader is the one people praise. The great leader is one whose people say, 'We did it ourselves.'"

CHARACTERISTIC 3

Include all stakeholders. Become beholden to none.

If a vision has life, it is in the minds of many. Don't forget to include everyone who will be affected by your vision. How many times have we seen a great school technology plan scuttled because everyone forgot to include the board of trustees in the process?

Educators often seem to avoid confrontation rather than seek it. This tendency leads us to include our supporters and exclude those who do not agree with us. No significant change can take place (and an ambitious technology plan is, by definition, a significant change) without all the players present at the table. Seek out the hard-to-

See LEADERSHIP, 31

BY LINDA BRUG

TALKING ABOUT BOOKS

I will always remember the year that I shared a special book with my seventh-and-eighth-grade class. I had just finished *Good Night, Mr. Tom* by Michelle Magorian, and I knew that my students would love this book as much as I did.

Good Night, Mr. Tom is a sensitive story of an abused small boy and an elderly man who takes him in as an evacuee during World War II. The gradual development of their mutual caring creates a story that captures the reader's interest. The author's vivid descriptions of a World War II English village brings the narrative to life. The accurate historical background serves as an integral part of the story.

The central characters of this book are William Beech and Tom Oakley. When he appears at Mr. Tom's door, Willie is nearly nine, but looks like a six-year-old. The thin, malnourished boy is covered with bruises and cuts from his mother's beatings. Because of his years of abuse, everyone and everything terrifies the boy. He does not communicate with anyone and cannot read or write. Gradually Mr. Tom's kindness and encouragement overcome Willie's fears, and he becomes a happy, normal boy. Through association with other children, especially Zach, he develops friendships for the first time. Willie's unforgettable story looks optimistically at the potential of patience, courage, and love to change things for the better.

Tom and Willie, plagued by problems that they cannot solve alone, develop a mutual love and respect that give them courage. They need each other.

Years later, students still remember reading that book in my class. If I had to choose a book to take to a desert island, I would choose *Good Night, Mr. Tom.*

What book would you choose? I invite you to share your own favorite books in this column.

Please write to "Talking About Books," c/o Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Drive, Ventura, CA 93003, and share your thoughts about the best books in your life. ■

TORNADO

Whirlwind destruction

A wicked dance across the Earth

Tornado Rumba

Michael Gnes
Grade 8, Cerro Villa
Middle School
Orange
Joyce Krauser, teacher

CALLING ALL STUDENTS!

Would you like to get published? Did you create a Goldberg cartoon and forget to send it in? You may still send it in and win a copy of *The Internet for Kids*. Also send your art work, stories, poems, or other types of writing by October 20th to: Linda Brug, 3721 Sheldon Dr., Ventura, CA 93003.

A Leader for Tomorrow

If you were to be called a leader, what would you want to have done to earn the title?

1

Look at the list of names below and circle those that you feel are leaders.

Walt Disney	Richard Nixon
Jesse Jackson	Willie Nelson
Eleanor Roosevelt	Tom Cruise
Paul Revere	Billie Holiday
Billie Jean King	Pope John Paul
Ronald Reagan	Johnny Appleseed
Oliver North	Liza Minelli
Jane Fonda	Susan B. Anthony
Ann Landers	Malcolm X
Adolph Hitler	Martin Luther King
Lee Iacocca	Hillary Clinton
Walter Cronkite	Madonna
Neil Armstrong	Cesar Chavez
Winslow Homer	Carl Sagan
Gary Larson	
Florence Nightingale	

2

Look at the names you circled. What do they have in common? Create a definition for a leader.

3

List 10 qualities of a leader.

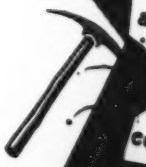
4

Is a hero always a leader? Why or why not?

5

Describe what a leader would be like in each of the following communities:

- a small mining town in the late 1800s
- an inner city area of Los Angeles
- a rural farming community in Nebraska
- a small Vietnamese community in San Francisco



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

6 Create a leader for one of the following communities. Describe what types of challenges the leader would face.

- a colony in outer space
- a renovated inner city slum
- a multicultural metropolis
- a highly automated underground city
- an underwater town

7 We can learn more about a society by studying its images of leaders and heroes. Choose one of the following examples and research the leaders and heroes. What can you learn about the society of the time through your research?

- comic strips from the '60s
- films from the '40s
- *People* magazine from the '80s
- Bob Dylan songs
- *I Love Lucy* shows

8 Decide what kind of a leader will be needed to deal with the following problems:

- increased racial tension
- homelessness
- gang warfare
- immigration, legal and illegal
- a nuclear war

9 Do leaders of the past possess the same qualities as leaders of the present? Explain.

10 Not everyone is a leader. What would happen if everyone tried to be a leader?

11 Create the perfect leader and design a comic strip complete with adventures.

Based on material in *Student Leadership Training: A Teacher's Guidebook* prepared by GATE middle school teachers, Ventura Unified School District.

ELECTION CONNECTION

Can you name the candidates who are running for president of the United States? Presidential elections only occur every four years; so until the November election takes place, we will be bombarded with news of the candidates and who is winning according to various polls. Why not take advantage of history in action and try some campaign activities of your own? Who knows? Maybe one day you will be able to share your ideas in a campaign of your own.

★ Create an election bulletin board in your room. Post some political cartoons and advertisements from magazines and newspapers. What issues do they seem to be targeting? Draw a cartoon of your own highlighting one of the issues and share it with your family.

★ List the characteristics that you think are important for a president to have. Read the newspaper, listen to TV and radio interviews, and research the candidates to see which one appears to possess the characteristics that you think are important.

★ Imagine that you are a candidate for president. Create your own home page including information about yourself, ways to get voters involved in your campaign, and why voters should elect you.

★ Watch a week of political advertisements on TV. Keep track of the number of negative and positive ads. Do you think that the negative or the positive ads are more effective? Why? Ask family members which ads seem more persuasive.

★ Compile a list of the reasons people should vote. Create a bumper sticker encouraging people to vote.

★ Many campaigns have used songs to catch the American vote. Use a familiar tune and write lyrics for a candidate.

★ Talk with your teacher about setting up a mock election at your school. Voting could take place the day before the real election so that you could compare your school results with that of the nation.

★ Create five questions you would like to ask the candidates. Watch a national debate to see if the candidates answer your questions.

★ Visit the candidates on the World Wide Web:
Bill Clinton - http://www.whitehouse.gov
Bob Dole - http://www.dole96com
A site with other information about the election: http://www.ipt.com/vote

★ Write a one-act play comparing and contrasting the campaign strategies of the candidates.

TECH NET BY JUDY LIEB

GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS ON THE NET

There are numerous government and political resources available on the Internet. This article describes some of the more popular sites available on the World Wide Web, and a few gopher, or text only, sites. They are organized into groups of federal government resources, state resources, local resources, and political resources.

The article is meant to provide a resource to teachers, parents, and students. It is not a comprehensive compendium of all available government or political Internet sites. Individual political campaign Web sites are not listed but can be found as links on some of the sites mentioned below.

Political information on the Internet is usually very current. Some sites provide archives of previous elections, controversial legislation, or political history which may be useful to students and researchers.

There are many Internet books available to help locate more government and political resources. Be aware, however, that the Internet changes daily and some of the resources listed in books (or even in this article) may be out-of-date by the time of publication. To locate the most current information available, you should do a keyword search of World Wide Web sites using one of the popular search engines such as Yahoo - A Guide to the World Wide Web (www.yahoo.com). If you have not used a search engine before, the directions on the screen are usually clear. It may take some practice to narrow the search so that you get the right information.

If you are a beginner, remember that to access the Internet, a service provider is needed (such as America Online, Telis, CompuServe, or Prodigy, among others). To access the World Wide Web, use browser software such as Netscape or Web Crawler.

I hope that this list of sites will be helpful as you learn more about government and political resources on the Internet.

Good luck on your government and political tour of Internet sites. ■

JUDY LIEB, Ed.D., is the GATE coordinator in the Fullerton School District and the *Communicator* associate editor for technology.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

The White House - http://www.whitehouse.gov

The White House World Wide Web site has more than just a picture of the White House. It includes

- The Interactive Citizens' Handbook
- tours
- a virtual library
- hot topics
- White House for Kids
- messages from the president and vice-president

You can send electronic mail messages to the president and vice-president. Their e-mail addresses are: president @whitehouse.gov and vice.president@whitehouse.gov.

Legi-Slate Gopher Service - gopher.legislate.com

This text-based service provides information on bills and a politician's support of or opposition to a certain bill. You can also search by congressperson, the name of a bill, or keyword.

If you are interested in government departments, most have Internet sites with information about their programs. Two examples are the U.S. Department of Education (http://www.ed.gov) and the U.S. Department of the Treasury (http://www.ustreas.gov).

Congressional Quarterly - gopher.cqalert.com

This text-based site features a weekly report on Congress and the status of bills.

U.S. House of Representatives -http://www.house.gov

The House of Representatives Web Server includes information on the following

- legislative process
- schedules

- who's who
- organization and operation
- laws
- empowering the citizen
- links to other sources

Thomas - http://www.thomas.loc.gov
Thomas is the official government site for Congress. It is named for Thomas Jefferson and is one of the best federal legislative information resources on the Internet. Information available includes

- Congress This Week
- historical documents
- bill texts
- the legislative process
- summaries and status of bills
- committee representatives information
- other U. S. government Internet resources

STATE GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

California Assembly Web Server - http://www.assembly.ca.gov
This site contains

- connections to Assembly members' home pages
- legislative calendars
- a bill search
- Assembly committees
- California codes
- state government links
- Fellowship Program information
- Capitol Museum Tour

California Senate Web Server- http://www.sen.ca.gov
The Senate Web Server provides information about the California Senate and its members. Features include

- Senate leadership
- Senator homepage
- legislation
  - –bill text analysis
  - –statutes
  - –history and notes
  - –California codes
  - –searchable California codes
- Senate committees and offices
- legislative schedules
- How to Participate in the Lawmaking Process
- ballot measures and election news
- Senate Internet services

California Codes and Laws - http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html
This is the site to visit if you want an easy way to search for the text of California Codes. It can also be reached from the Assembly and Senate Web Pages.

California Legislative Information - http://www.leginfo.ca.gov
Legislative information from the California Legislative Counsel. Information on this site includes

- Today's Events
- bill information
- Your Legislature
- legislative publications

California Online Voter Guide - http://www.calvoter.org/home.html
This site provides election results and other topics related to voter issues. It includes

- Your Voices Count
- Fall '94 Election
- The Fall '96 Edition (debuted in September)
- Digital Sunlight (a call for electronic campaign disclosures)
- California Online Voter Guide Spring '96
- San Francisco Online Voter Guide

Election Results - http://www.election.ca.gov
The secretary of state and Digital Equipment Corporation provide election results. This site will connect you to the election servers run by Digital.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

Local and State Government Resource - http://lcweb.loc.gov/global/state/stategov.html
This is a resource page from the Library of Congress. It includes

- meta-indexes for state and local government information
- state maps
- state government information
- links to City Net and USA City Link

USA CityLink Project - www.usacityhlink.com
This site has information primarily on relocation and tourism for all the states. I found my hometown listed under a "region." However, if you do some searching, you can also find government information. I was able to get information on the city council, meetings, phone numbers and frequently asked questions. County government information is also available.

City Net - http://www.city.net
This site includes most of the cities of the world and it is searchable. Once a city is selected, City Info is one of the menu choices. Under City Info select City Web Sites, then Government. You can find information about the mayor, city council, departments, commissions, and committees, as you might guess. This site is best for large cities.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

POLITICS

The Political Participation Project - http://www.ai.mit.edu

This project is a research program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It has many links to political information sources on the Internet.

Project Vote Smart - http://www.vote-smart.org

This one-stop political shopping site has

- links to candidates' home pages
- speeches of presidential candidates
- representatives by zip codes
- links to organizations related to politics

Politics Now - http://www.politicsnow.com

A service of ABC News, *The National Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Newsweek*, this site is updated daily. Links to each of the news agencies or publications sponsoring the site are also available. The menu includes

- Hot List
- News
- Views
- Campaign '96
- Issues
- Interaction

This site is searchable and is indexed.

The Valley

I once saw a valley,
a valley of life
Like no other I had ever seen.

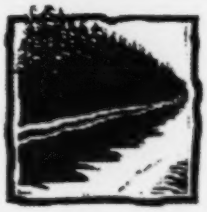
I saw, nestled in the
valley's warmth
A lamb yearning
for a first drink.

Over the newborn lamb
I saw an eagle
Touch the sky and soar
Downward as
It had always done.

Where the eagle landed
I saw a brook.
An ancient brook
Which spoke of
The far off places
it's been and of
the joys seen
along its shores.

Overhanging this brook
Was a rose bud
Which I watched
Open into a blossom
of unparalleled
beauty and purity.

Then the valley became dim
I looked to the horizon
for the setting sun
and couldn't find it.



I realized it wasn't the sun,
but my life that was fading.
In my last moments I saw
the lamb still nursing,
the eagle soaring
the brook entertaining
an open ear
the rose still dancing
It all kept on going
without me.
And at this last moment
my insignificance was
known to me and
only me.

Ruben Montiel
Grade 12, Ventura High
Ventura
Tania Lang, teacher

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PONDERING POLITICS IN THE CLASSROOM

BY VICTORIA SIEGEL AND SANDRA N. KAPLAN

This unit is divided into three sections:

1. Studying Political Science: Think like a political scientist.
2. Studying Political Philosophy: Think like a political philosopher.
3. Studying Contemporary Candidates: Think like a researcher.

Students can select or be assigned a section of the unit, or students can move developmentally through the entire unit.

STUDYING POLITICAL SCIENCE: THINK LIKE A POLITICAL SCIENTIST

- Introduce students to the role of the political scientist as that of an individual who studies the behavior patterns of people as they relate to political conditions and influences.
- Ask students to think like a political scientist by interpreting data from a fictitious election (see Oak County City Council results, below). Together, analyze the data to explain the political behavior of the voters and then use the same data to predict how these voters might vote in future elections.
- Present students with actual election statistics from the 1990 and 1986 elections. Interpret these statistics to explain the political behavior of voters during the election. Compare students' interpretations of the statistics to those made by political analysts reporting in primary documents such as newspapers, journals, and magazines.

STUDYING POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: THINK LIKE A POLITICAL PHILOSOPHER

- Discuss with students the fundamental question of political philosophers: Who should rule?
- Present students with the beliefs of two famous political philosophers. Make their beliefs the basis of a discussion of candidates running in the 1996 local and presidential elections.

PLATO

Plato believed that ruling was a skill. He believed that those who displayed the greatest skill for leadership ought to be given the authority to rule society.

LOCKE

Locke believed that leaders are appointed by the people and are responsible to them.

- Investigate the concepts of politics and political leadership proposed by philosophers and theorists

Oak County City Council - Election for City Councilperson

Farmers		Industrialists		Suburbanites	
Age 20–39	Age 40–70	Age 20–39	Age 40–70	Age 20–39	Age 40–70

such as
- Aristotle
- Saint Thomas Aquinas
- Niccolo Machiavelli
- Jean Jacques Rousseau
- Confucius
- Karl Marx
- Sun Yat-sen

Compare these ideas to those proposed by contemporary political philosophers.

- Have students state their own political viewpoints and apply them to a historic or contemporary political leader.

STUDYING CONTEMPORARY CANDIDATES: THINK LIKE A RESEARCHER

- Discuss with students the relationship between the use of skills and popular appeal to define leaders.
- Use these statements to develop a student debate on the role of leadership:
  1. Leaders are born, not made.
  2. Time and events, not skills or personality, make the leader.

  Have students relate these statements to historic and contemporary leaders with information gathered from the leaders' biographies.
- Introduce students to the **Candidate Profile Research Sheets (pp 24 and 25).**
  1. Discuss the various attributes of a leader.
  2. Have students select one or more of the leadership attributes to use in analyzing a candidate.
  3. Direct students to research in print media (newspapers, periodicals), electronic media (TV, radio, Internet), and campaign literature and ads for evidence of how the candidate exhibits the attribute(s).
  4. Over a period of time, have students make entries for each time they view, hear, or read about the attribute.
  5. Ask students to use their cumulative evidence to determine the reliability of the attribute on the scale.
  6. Have students summarize their own perceptions of the candidate in relatjonship to the attribute studied.

  The students' completed research sheets can be used to create a class profile of the candidates and/or to prepare student debaters to participate in debates about the candidates.

VICTORIA SIEGEL is coordinator of Euclid Gifted/High Ability Bilingual Magnet in Los Angeles and the former CAG educator representative from the Mission Region. SANDRA N. KAPLAN is a clinical professor, School of Education, University of Southern California, past president of CAG, and president-elect of NAGC.

Mystery Love

As we walked through the fields of gold,

The leaves breaking under our feet,

The delicious, smoky fragrance will lead us further

into this paradise,

As we sit in the crackling leaves, we will sort out and plan

our future.

Every breath smells stronger from the nearby maple tree,

His eyes, the color of an emerald, glow without fading

in

my eyes,

The jewel that now lies on my finger, glimmers as the

sun-filled room adds excitement to those long, tedious

days.

I can feel his heart as it beats, in rhythm, in my blood,

I can still smell the dried grass on that wonderful,

miraculous afternoon.

Though my heart burns like a red, flaming torch,

I still remain in secret

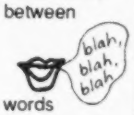
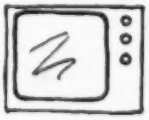
For sometimes he seems a secret to me.

Holly Arnstein, age 10
Grade 4
Los Angeles

From an assignment based on *Witch of Blackbird Pond* by Elizabeth Speare.

Candidate Profile Research

Office _____ Candidate _____

Attribute	Evidence	Evaluation
Relationship between  words and action	Print media (newspapers, periodicals) Date | Date | Date	Reliability Index 1---------2---------3---------4---------5 Conclusion: _____
Ability to persuade and/or inspire followers	 Other media (radio, TV, Internet) Date | Date | Date	Reliability Index 1---------2---------3---------4---------5 Conclusion: _____
	Campaign literature and campaign ads Date | Date | Date	Reliability Index 1---------2---------3---------4---------5 Conclusion: _____

Candidate Profile Research

Office _____ Candidate _____

Attribute	Evidence	Evaluation
Vision of direction or course of action	Print media (newspapers, periodicals) Date | Date | Date	Reliability Index 1---------2---------3---------4---------5 Conclusion:
Knowledge about issues	Other media (radio, TV, Internet) Date | Date | Date	Reliability Index 1---------2---------3---------4---------5 Conclusion:
	Campaign literature and campaign ads Date | Date | Date	Reliability Index 1---------2---------3---------4---------5 Conclusion:

SCHOOL REFORM

Continued from 1

that systemic change was needed including comprehensive, coordinated change in key areas of education: teacher preparation, curriculum, standards, assessment, methodology, and staff development. Additionally, increased community/family involvement and local school site control were seen as ways to address the needs of students at individual school sites. Efforts to develop systemic reform in California can be seen in charter schools and schools with site-based management. In addition to the involvement of educators in such models, a larger number of parents, business leaders, and politicians help search for solutions to educational woes. On March 31, 1994, President Clinton signed the GOALS 2000: Educate America Act which provides seed money to each state willing to develop its own plan to reach the national education goals.

A recent national survey by the University of Virginia reveals that gifted students in special programs, separate classes, or pull-out programs show greater achievement than gifted students in regular classes. This special program is at San Jose Highly Gifted Magnet in Los Angeles

Systemic reform includes the notion that grade level standards can help educators provide a consistent academic program to students regardless of their geographical, economic, or ethnic background.

Standards become meaningful to parents, students, and educators when tied to assessment. In California standards will be established in each subject area and at every grade level from kindergarten through twelfth grade. A state assessment is currently being developed. A total of 49 states are in the process of developing standards (American Federation of Teachers, Spring 1996). Once state assessment tools and standards are in place, all teachers must know the curriculum thoroughly, know how to deliver instruction, and know how to evaluate whether students are learning the material. The teacher should conduct various types of assessment, including performance-based assessment, throughout the year that are appropriate to the unit of study.

School Reform Requirements

Ideally, a school implementing school reform should have a knowledgeable instructional leader who involves all members of the school community in decisions made for the benefit of students. In high schools students may be included in the decision-making process. Parents should feel welcome at the high school and should support the educational process at home as well as actively contributing to student achievement. Students achieve through involvement in meaningful instruction.

Instruction no longer focuses solely on a linear, skills-based curriculum, but on a balanced curriculum where students not only acquire skills, but learn how to apply them. This balanced curriculum is part of the California State Frameworks. Depth of knowledge in a subject area is preferred over breadth. School reform has brought an emphasis on higher order thinking skills, problem-solving strategies, and cooperative-learning strategies in the classroom (EdSource, 1994). There has also been an infusion of technology into the curriculum, though budget constraints result in a lack of consistency from district to district. Teachers who utilize students' prior knowledge in the search for meaning are successfully implementing the California subject frameworks, often described as the "thinking curriculum" (California Department of Education and California Association for the Gifted [CDE & CAG], 1994).

The Thinking Curriculum

The thinking curriculum incorporates components previously described as appropriate for gifted and talented learners:

- Meaning is central. Students acquire knowledge to the extent that they make connections.
- Knowledge and thinking are interdependent. Thinking requires something to think about, and knowledge makes thought more powerful, that is, the more one knows about a given subject, the greater the possibility of advanced thought about that subject.
- Multiple solutions are typical. Many problems and tasks have more than one correct solution.

Understanding the perspective, approach, or solution offered by someone else serves to enhance understanding of not only one's own thought, but also of the many alternatives not selected or imagined.

- Collaboration helps. Students who share an interest, task, or goal learn by testing their ideas with one another—listening, evaluating, and refining their thinking as they pool their expertise.
- Effort is valued. Learning and knowledge are complex, and the construction of meaning depends on extended effort.

(CDE & CAG, 1994)

Commonalities in Instruction for Gifted and Talented and the Thinking Curriculum

Gifted and Talented Instruction	The Thinking Curriculum
meaning is central	meaningful, student centered
depth, complexity, novelty, acceleration	depth over breadth
higher order thinking skills	higher order thinking skills
multiple solutions are typical	problem-solving strategies
collaboration helps	cooperative learning

Gifted Students and School Reform

The purpose of the thinking curriculum is to enhance learning for all students. School reform has focused on providing instruction that will enable low achieving and average students to work on grade level (Report to the State Board, 1996). In GOALS 2000 the national education goals want "all students to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy." The statement raises several questions for educators of gifted and talented students:

- Are gifted and talented students participating in programs that encourage them to use their minds well?
- How do educators prepare students who perform above grade level to maximize their potential?
- Do these students need special attention, or is it sufficient to simply surpass grade level expectations?

Are gifted and talented students participating in programs that encourage them to use their minds well?

The answer may depend on where the student spends the school day. Most gifted and talented students spend the majority of the school day in regular classrooms where little is done to differentiate the curriculum for their special learning needs (Delcourt, 1994). A recent national survey administered by the University of Virginia reveals that gifted students in special programs, separate classes, or pull-out programs show greater achievement than gifted students in regular classes. Some special programs exist for gifted and talented students and serve as laboratories of innovation; however, few of these innovative approaches have made their way into the regular classroom.

A national survey of elementary school programs found that 84% of assignments for gifted students were the same as those made to the whole class. "Most academically talented students, [however] have already mastered up to one half of the required

National Education Goals

By the year 2000:

- All children in America will start school ready to learn.
- The high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90%.
- All students will leave grades 4, 8, and 12 having demonstrated competency in challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. Every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in the nation's modern economy.
- U. S. students will be first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.
- Every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and will exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.
- Every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence, and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined enviornment conducive to learning.
- The nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.
- Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional, and academic growth of children.

curriculum offered to them in elementary school" (Ross, 1993). Middle school reform does not specifically address the needs of gifted and talented learners. Opportunities for these learners are "scattered and uncoordinated" (Ross, 1993). The college preparatory curriculum for academically gifted high school students allows for little flexibility. Additionally, many of these students are able to become honor students even though they may spend little time studying. A high school valedictorian related the consequences of not acquiring systematic study skills:

Technology is an effective tool for both educators and students.

I breezed through classes in 12 years, graduated from high school as the valedictorian, and then almost flunked out of college because I never learned to work hard at learning. I feel angry, jealous, and cheated about the potential that was lost as a result of my high school's lack of special programs for the gifted. (Ross, 1993)

How do educators prepare students who perform above grade level to maximize their potential?

When teachers know how to address the special needs of gifted and talented students, they can help students work towards their potential. Although the structure of the school may change and laws can be promulgated, the most vital action still occurs in the classroom where the most important participants are the students and the teacher. Professional development is a key component for implementing change. In fact, one of the national education goals states, "The nation's teaching force will have access to programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century." Large numbers of educators must know how to differentiate the curriculum for gifted and talented students. Since most intellectually gifted students are found in regular classrooms rather than special schools or separate classes, teachers must know how to differentiate in a heterogeneous classroom. Gifted and talented students present another challenge for teachers already responsible for second language learners, special education students who are mainstreamed, district paperwork, and student discipline problems. Curriculum compacting, telescoping, and other methods of addressing the needs of gifted and talented learners must become a part of the regular classroom teacher's repertoire. These methods enable teachers and students to plan an individual program for the student that may incorporate greater flexibility, independent study, acceleration, and ability grouping within a heterogeneous classroom. Additionally, these methods can be used in ways that allow for the development of intellectual ability, talent, and creativity while acknowledging the strengths of all students in the classroom.

The successes of Javits grant projects, other innovative programs, and research regarding gifted and talented students need to be communicated to all educators. Ideally, teachers should have the opportunity to observe and communicate with participants in innovative programs. Technology will offer another way for researchers and educators to share information more effectively. If all educators continue to grow and become more effective in the classroom, the instructional program will improve for all students including the gifted and talented.

Do gifted and talented students need special attention, or is it sufficient to simply surpass grade level expectations?

All students, including those with special talents or gifts, need to work to their ability level. Within this population there are levels of giftedness, as Dr. Linda Silverman points out. She states, "Mildly, moderately, highly, and extraordinarily gifted children are as different from each other as mildly, moderately, severely, and profoundly retarded children are from each other, but the differences among levels of giftedness are rarely recognized." Another fact that is not always recognized is that gifted and talented students come from every economic and ethnic group. All of these students need to receive the attention needed to help them work to whatever their potential may be.

There is wide support for gifted students to receive special attention. The results of a 1992 Gallup poll about challenging the brightest students were as follows:

61% Schools should do more than they are.

35% Schools should continue to do the same.

2% Schools should do less.

In the same poll 84% said they would support the funding for a program to provide a more challenging education for the smartest and most gifted children as long as it did not reduce what was offered to average and slow learners. "Little difference existed in the responses of parents with children identified as having special abilities and in the responses of parents who did not" (Ross, 1993). Additionally, only 34% of respondents in another survey thought mixing fast learners and slow learners in the same class so that the slower students learn from the faster students would improve academic achievement (Public Agenda, 1996). Additional funding is expected for the GATE program in California for the 1996-97 school year. This funding would provide additional opportunities to more effectively identify students eligible for GATE and to develop programs that will enhance the achievement of California's gifted and talented students.

Through school reform, educators have the opportunity to raise the ceiling or highest academic level as they raise the floor or minimum level that is acceptable (Ross, 1993). To accomplish this task, educators must develop the ability to nurture and challenge the various levels of abilities found in the regular classroom including the academically gifted learner.

During the recent Olympic Games, viewers saw a relatively small group of athletes compete. All of the athletes were extremely focused and had spent years training to hone their physical talent. They represented the best in their field. Their professional trainers knew how to challenge and nurture them to strive to reach their highest level of performance. Their countrymen took pride in their athletic abilities and showered the winners with adulation and wealth.

GATE students are also comparatively small in number. They will spend years in the K–12 educational system. They can be guided to focus their intellects and talents to become the best in their chosen fields. They need professionals trained to challenge and nurture them to strive to reach their highest levels of performance. Ideally, our culture will begin to value and model for our youth an appreciation for intellectual and creative talents. ■

REFERENCES

Bracey, G. W. (1994, January). Tips for readers of research. *Phi Delta Kappa.*

California Department of Education & the California Association for the Gifted. (1994). *Differentiating the core curriculum and instruction to provide advanced learning opportunities.* Sacramento: Department of Education.

Delcourt, M. A. B., Loyd, B. H., Cornell, D. G., Goldberg, M. D. (1994). *Evaluation of the Effect of Programming Arrangements on Student Learning Outcomes.* Charlottesville: The University of Virginia.

EdSource. (1994). *The rhetoric of reform.*

Public Agenda. (1996). *Given the circumstances teachers talk about public education today.* New York.

Reis, S. M., Westberg, K. L., Kulikowich, J., Caillar, F., & Herbert, T. (1993). *Why not let high ability students start school in January? The Curriculum Compacting Study* (Research Monograph 93106). Storrs, CT: National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented.

Report to the state board of education on gifted and talented education. (1996, January)

Ross, P. O. *National excellence: A case for developing America's talent.* Washington, D.C.: U. S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

Silverman, L. K. Scapegoating the gifted: The new national sport. *Images,* 6 W 91–92. Indiana Association for the Gifted.

U. S. Department of Education. (1994). Federal initiatives to support systemic reform. *The ERIC Review.* Access ERIC, vol. 3 F.

LISA JEFFREY is a commissioner on the Department of Education Curriculum Development and Supplemental Materials Commission and the Coordinator of Baldwin Hills Gifted/High-Ability Magnet in Los Angeles.

Making Sense out of GATE Funding

Looking for value for GATE dollars?

$200 in GATE funding can buy some supplemental materials or part of a field trip that will benefit a limited number of students for a specified amount of time. Investing that same money in professional staff development opportunities such as the CAG Conference or the CAG Institutes can enable an educator to learn effective ways of teaching differentiated instruction across the curriculum.

So that same money would benefit an average of 32 students a year multiplied by the number of years that educator remains in teaching.

Now that most identified gifted students are in the regular classroom and only limited funds are available, it makes sense to make every cent count.

Picturing California

BY BARBARA BECKER

Because art and music belong naturally in social studies, I integrate the visual arts into the fourth-grade study of California.

California's land has always shaped the way people live. The first inhabitants of California found it to be a land rich in plants and animals. It is a place that is rainy and dry, hilly and flat, noisy and quiet, hot and cold. It is a state of four regions: the coast, the central valley, mountains, and deserts.

While studying why California's regions are different and the economic impact of the state's natural resources from these regions, the fourth graders looked at their state in terms of its visual beauty. Edward Weston wrote, "Everything worth photographing is in California." He was responding to the diversity of textures around him on the Monterey Peninsula. Gaining inspiration from Weston's comment, the fourth graders painted California rather than photographing it.

A wide variety of activities were incorporated into this unit including designing flags for the various regions, making papier-maché and clay representations of the fruits and vegetables of California, drawing missions found throughout the state, and creating artifacts and tools from natural materials found in California. The unit "Picturing California" enabled students to study all aspects of California—early history, geography, economics, and cultures—by utilizing study skills, map skills, critical thinking, and visual learning. ■

BARBARA BECKER is the magnet coordinator and art instructor at Wonderland Gifted/High Ability Magnet in Los Angeles.

Gifted and Talented Education

Programs for gifted and talented students are not mandated by federal law. As a result, gifted programs vary widely from state to state (Ross, 1993). According to Pat O'Connell Ross, however, the number of gifted programs in the United States has increased significantly. Twenty years ago, there were seven states with legislation and funding for gifted and talented education programs. By 1990 there were programs in every state. Additionally, model programs for gifted and talented students have challenged educators to improve curriculum and teaching strategies and encouraged them to raise expectations for all students. (Ross, 1993).

In California, districts may choose whether or not to participate in the Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) program. Districts choosing to participate receive approximately $6.57 per average daily attendance (ADA) (Report to the State Board of Education [Report to SBE], 1996). Students participating in the GATE program are to receive differentiated instruction. Higher level thinking concepts are used to teach units through novelty, complexity, acceleration, and depth. The Report to the State Board of Education states, "In many cases, even a good quality education program is not sufficiently challenging for a student with special gifts or talents, and GATE funding is used to design and deliver a supplemental and differentiated curriculum and instruction for individuals or groups of students with special needs in order to raise achievement" (Report to SBE, 1996). Due to lack of funding, no data has been compiled to evaluate California's GATE program.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE:

LEADERSHIP

Continued from 14

convince and bring them in. If you can't sell the vision to these people, then the idea needs work.

Don't allow one constituency to take over the vision and begin to exclude others (and don't become the keeper of the flame yourself.) I have created a somewhat twisted aphorism for this characteristic: Success has many parents, and they all want sole custody. The corollary is that failure is always your kid.

CHARACTERISTIC 4

Create a network and use it.

You can't do everything alone; ask effective educational technology leaders. They establish and maintain a very active rolodex of colleagues whom they can call when they need advice or help. These networks take advantage of technology—they use e-mail, listserves, and databases to communicate and to keep track of resources.

The only way to start a network is decidedly low tech. My best contacts invariably begin when I hear someone make a remark which interests me and I take the time to discuss it with him or her. The key is to engage the person in a meaningful exchange of ideas which ends in an exchange of business cards (e-mail addresses, whatever). Once you have made a contact, keep it alive. (The use-it-or-lose-it rule applies to nothing if not to networks.) It takes a lot of work to maintain a network, but the cost-benefit ratio is great.

CHARACTERISTIC 5

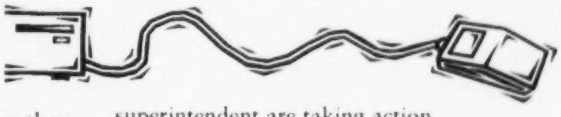
Attack one problem at a time but remember the system.

If you are a fan of bumper-sticker philosophy, this idea can also be expressed as, "Think globally. Act locally." Identify the critical changes needed to bring your vision to reality. Choose the most important changes and start there, but don't forget that you are attempting change in a system. A change in one area always affects the whole organization. Senge (1994) puts it this way: "Dividing an elephant in half does not produce two small elephants." It is important to place any action you choose to take in the context of the entire system and to view that system as a living one.

CHARACTERISTIC 6

Concentrate on solutions.

California's leaders must stop thinking of technology as hardware boxes and software bundles. I think we are all pleased when we hear that the governor and the superintendent are taking action to make technology part of the everyday educational lives of teachers and students. On the other hand, proposals to place businesses' cast-off computers and volunteer-installed networks in classrooms are distractions from the main issue—technology is an investment in the future citizens of California. Technology in schools is not the end but the means to our real objective—improved student achievement and education.



Educators have been distracted from this goal as well. The department of education reports that 65% of California schools have created a technology use plan. These plans too often focus on the particular hardware and software setup a team has identified. The missing ingredient is a clear statement of each plan's answer to the question: What changes in teaching and learning will take place as a result of the use of technology? Technology is an effective solution to real educational challenges. Make the case for those solutions; don't suggest another solution looking for a problem!

CHARACTERISTIC 7

Stop the numbers game.

The number of computers per student or networks in a classroom has become the end product of so many of our state's programs and initiatives. It is a numbers game. This game constitutes a real threat to technology's use in schools. What difference does it make if the computer-to-student ratio is 21:1 or 12.1:1 if a positive effect on student learning can't be shown? It is dangerous to reduce the ratio without creating any real change in education. What happens when the ratio declines to 1:1 and there is no improvement in educational outcome for students? Technology could become just one more broken educational promise.

This is the short list of essential characteristics and advice for educational technology leaders. The leadership thing is a combination of preparation, timing, sensitivity, and perseverance. Each of us has a role to play in the challenge of making technology an effective part in the educational lives of teachers and students. ■

REFERENCES

Burns, J. M. (1978). *Leadership.* New York: Harper & Row.

Covey, S. R. (1992). *Principle-centered leadership.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Covey, S. R. (1990). *The seven habits of highly effective people: Restoring the character ethic.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Senge, P. (1994). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization.*

Wheatley, M. (1992). *Leadership and the new science: Learning about organization from an orderly universe.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler

JOHN VAILLE has been an elementary teacher, county staff development coordinator, and school principal in his 22 years in California schools. He was the executive director of Computer-Using Educators, Inc. (CUE) for several years. John currently works for the Stanislaus County Office of Education. Contact him at jvaille@aol.com.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

If you are *not* already a CAG member, please use the application below to become a continuing supporter of gifted education. Because CAG is active in lobbying efforts to promote appropriate education for gifted and talented students, dues payments are not tax deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

NAME: _____
Last First Middle Initial

PREFERRED ADDRESS: _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP: _____ COUNTY: _____

PHONE: Home ( ) _____ Work ( ) _____ AFFILIATION: _____
School district of employment or attendance

MEMBERSHIP/SERVICE CATEGORY
(for mailing addresses outside the U.S., add $10)

- ☐ Individual ($50)
- ☐ Family ($60)
- ☐ Patron ($100)
- ☐ Sponsor ($300)
- ☐ Life ($500)
- ☐ Benefactor ($1000)
- ☐ Limited Income ($20, attach letter)
- ☐ Communicator Subscription only ($25)

ROLE

- ☐ Administrator/Coordinator
- ☐ Board of Education Member
- ☐ Consultant
- ☐ Counselor/Psychologist
- ☐ Parent
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Other

SPECIAL SKILLS/INTERESTS

- ☐ Art/Music
- ☐ Humanities
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Computers
- ☐ Advocacy/Legislation
- ☐ Other

PAYMENT ENCLOSED

- ☐ Personal Check #
- ☐ District Check
- ☐ Purchase Order #

CHARGE: ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa

Card No. _____

Exp. Date _____

Mail with check or charge information to California Association for the Gifted,
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19, Mountain View, CA 94040; Phone: 415/965-0653, Fax: 415/965-0654

California Association for the Gifted
426 Escuela Avenue, Suite 19 ■ Mountain View, CA 94040
Phone: 415-965-0653 ■ FAX: 415-965-0654

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Canoga Park, CA
Permit #330

ERIC Clearinghouse
Janet Drill
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091-1589

Time Value
Dated Material